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THE WORKS
OF
JOHN TRAFFORD CLEGG.

Yours truly

J. J. Cleff.

THE WORKS

OF

JOHN TRAFFORD CLEGG

["TH' OWD WEIGHVER."]

STORIES, SKETCHES, AND RHYMES

IN THE

ROCHDALE DIALECT.

"He had the dialect, and different skill,
Catching all passions in his craft of will."
A Lover's Complaint.

Rochdale:

PRINTED BY JAMES CLEGG, "THE ALDINE PRESS."

1895.

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PREFACE.

WITH few exceptions the pieces contained in this volume were first published in the *Rochdale Observer*, appearing in weekly instalments spread over the space of three years. It was necessary in this mode of publication that each section presented should have a degree of completeness and independent interest of its own, and this fact determined the general length and plan of the compositions.

The dialect is closely reproduced from that spoken in the Roch basin and on the inner slopes of the hills which enclose it. Concise and forcible, this tongue speaks of a race who had little time to waste in idle chatter, whose deep emotions demanded strong forms of utterance; and it connects us by an unbroken chain with a period long preceding the Norman invasion. It lacks delicacy, laughs at refinements, and does not reach the highest standards of moral or mental elevation, for which reason it is ill adapted to express minute shades of character or feeling; but snobbery and humbug wither under its vigorous downright phrases, and we plainly discern in it the shrewdness, humour, thriftiness, honesty, and truth of the people who have made it their own.

This dialect is rapidly dying. In the last twenty years its very roots have been cut away. Soon mere scraps and relics of it will remain—fossils on a beach, broken melodies of old times heard in a dream. But such of us as were taught to think and speak in this unaffected and virile tongue cannot wholly forget its music while we live. If we use its terms no longer they are woven into the texture of our hearts, preserving for us thoughts of youth, and love, and hope; of happy years, and maybe years of sorrow too we would not lightly forget; of dear ones dead and dear ones living; of kinsfolk, friends, and every tie that binds us to the irrecoverable past. The dialect may die, but it cannot die for *us* until we ourselves are dead. Love it with natural love, hate it with æsthetic hatred, as we may severally choose, we shall still alike be unable to escape from its subtle influences. Our first learning will abide with us to the last, and on the grave's brink we shall hear yet sounding the tones that have echoed through our native valley for a thousand years.

J. T. C.

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Memoir of the Author.

WHENEVER a man displays superior abilities and rises above the common level, his admirers invariably manifest an eager desire to know something of his personality and the story of his life, and this is especially true of him who achieves success in either art or literature. The desire is a natural one, and should be gratified within reasonable limits, though it has been well remarked that "the inner life" of such a man of genius, "the secrets of his inspiration, the mysterious process by which his pearls of thought are produced, can never be made known, and the circumstances of his daily life have little more interest than those which fall to the common man." The unfortunate and lamented death of the author of the collected works contained in this volume, in the prime of life and at the moment of brightest literary promise, has rendered necessary this brief sketch of his interesting but singularly calm and uneventful career. He had but just commenced to tread the thorny paths of literature, for his literary birth may be truly said to date scarcely more than three years ago; and the possibilities of the future can only be dimly discerned by careful perusal of the first-fruits of his pen, and of these the reader must judge for himself. A literary career so brief and yet so brilliant and promising is probably unique; and this much may be said without any appearance of undue exaltation of the merits of the author, or claiming for him more than may abundantly be proved from his published writings, that he was a man of true literary genius, of original thought and keen mental insight and penetration, of rare powers of observation, and of cultivated tastes and style, and that he needed nothing more than the ripening and mellowing influences of time and experience. How far his surroundings may have tended to awaken and develop the latent talents of the man will perhaps be gathered from this memoir.

JOHN TRAFFORD CLEGG was born on the 22nd of January, in the year 1857, at the village of Milnrow, near Rochdale, noted for having been the home for so many years, and till his death, of John Collier, the eccentric genius who, under the quaint pseudonym of "Tim Bobbin," published the famous dialogue of "Tummus and Meary," which laid the foundation of Lancashire dialectical literature. He was born in the very heart of the village, where his father followed the business of a grocer. Both his parents came of old Lancashire families. The Cleggs have been resident in the township of Butterworth, of which Milnrow is the centre, from time immemorial, their occupation most probably dating from Saxon times. Within the township are the hamlets of Clegg (in which is situated the ancient many-gabled mansion known as Clegg Hall, the scene of one of the weird romances of Roby's "Traditions of Lancashire") and Little Clegg. It is in this district, and chiefly on the uplands and in the cloughs and denes of the western side of the Penine Range, that the homely but virile folk-speech of these parts of the County Palatine is most heard. Here, too, it has the nearest approach to the ancient idiomatic usages and peculiarities of pronunciation which distinguish it from other and kindred dialects of Saxon Northumbria as they survive to this day. The same dialect, becoming day by day less marked in character, prevails largely in Rochdale and (with some variations, of pronunciation chiefly) within an area whose radius extends to about half-a-dozen miles from the centre of the County Borough. Of its special characteristics nothing need be said here; they are well and truthfully illustrated in the volume to which this memoir is prefixed. Our author's view of it will be found briefly stated, but with keen critical appreciation, in the second paragraph of a preface which he wrote—rather it should be said, outlined—for this edition of his collected works.

JOHN TRAFFORD, as he was baptised, was the second son of his parents, who, a little more than a year after his birth, removed to Rochdale, about two miles distant. Here the father

continued in his old business, and brought up a family of five children, three of them sons, the oldest and youngest of whom survive. Three other children died early. Milnrow, or the ancient township in which it stands, has produced more than one centenarian, and often furnishes instances of remarkable longevity, and it is worthy of note that Mr. Clegg, senior, and his partner in life, are still living, and that he is over fourscore years of age, and still fairly hale and hearty. TRAFFORD'S boyhood's days were passed in Rochdale, with, of course, frequent visits to his native village, for which and its homely, honest, hardworking, and true-hearted inhabitants he always entertained the greatest affection. The older resident families are largely bound together by ties of kindred, and there are those who claim that some of the blood of "Tim Bobbin" flows in their veins. Not long since, being asked if he or his family did not claim some degree of kinship with Collier, "Th' Owd Weighver" jocularly replied, "Well, yes, Tim Bobbin's cow and my 'gron-feyther's' cow used to drink out of the same stream!" There are very few Milnrow people who do not speak the dialect from the time of their very first efforts to prattle, no matter of what station in life. Thus TRAFFORD CLEGG learnt it naturally and from his parents' lips, though in after life he could converse without the slightest perceptible trace of dialect. This is partly accounted for by the fact that when of sufficient age he was sent to Rochdale Grammar School, the foundation of Archbishop Parker in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. In this school, under the tuition of Mr. R. R. Grey, who had recently been appointed headmaster, he not only acquired a good, sound English education, but considerable mastery of the Latin tongue. In later life he was a diligent student of the English classics, and gained a wide acquaintance with current scientific and general literature. Beginning at a very early age to commit his thoughts to paper, he acquired an excellent style of composition, and wrote with perfect ease and fluency. He is seen at his best in his epistolary and other correspondence, for dialect-writing affords but scant opportunities for the display of the charms

and graces and artistic perfection of a highly cultured and polished style.

Our author's literary tendencies evinced themselves at an early period of life. Poetry was his especial delight, and his first literary attempts were in the way of versification. These youthful productions, which members of the family, and intimate friends to whom he showed them, judged to be excellent in their way, were far from coming up to his own mental standard; and with the native modesty and delicacy of feeling which characterised him throughout life, he declined to allow them to be published, and they appear to have been destroyed. Renewing his efforts and becoming more confident of his powers, he composed a considerable quantity of verse of a varied character when a young man, and consulted his elder brother, a master printer, as to the advisability of publishing the poems in a small volume. He was dissuaded, however, from his design, as such a venture would almost certainly have resulted in financial failure. Some of the poems appeared subsequently in magazines, and others are admirably fitted into the text of his stories and sketches. We have his own testimony to the early bent of his genius. Writing some months before his death to the London correspondent of the *Manchester Evening News*, with whom he was on terms of intimate friendship, and whom he had consulted with regard to a projected new novel, local and historical, this truly "pregnant and pathetic sentence" occurred, as the correspondent himself described it:—"I have been guilty of imaginative writing ever since I could use a pen; the vice would not be stamped out; it has been every year more difficult to repress, has now mastered me completely, and before long will dance an exultant hornpipe over my grave." The projected novel which he discussed with his friend was the last which came from his pen, though at the time of his death he was engaged upon a "sketch" which he left uncompleted. It is entitled "The Milnes of Whitacre," and is now in course of serial publication in the *Rochdale Observer*, in which newspaper all his productions, except those of his earlier years, have first appeared.

After leaving school, TRAFFORD was apprenticed to his elder brother, in whose establishment, now known as "The Aldine Press," he acquired a knowledge of the business in all its departments. He was studious in his habits, and was also very fond of music, the science of which he thoroughly mastered, and he became an able executant on the organ and pianoforte. If not devoted to music, his spare hours, in summer evenings especially, were usually spent in rambling with kindred spirits amid the beautiful and romantic scenes which are still to be found amongst the hills and dales in the neighbourhood, but at times his sole companion was some favourite book. In this respect he much resembled the late Edwin Waugh, with whose works and those of "Tim Bobbin" and other dialect-writers he was perfectly familiar. Probably he never dreamed at the time of aspiring to become "a worthy member of the Lancashire brotherhood of authors," but he was unconsciously qualifying himself to rank with the best of them in due time and season. Before he was out of his apprenticeship, and while yet in his teens, TRAFFORD, by arrangement, left the printing office of his brother and went to reside at Glossop, where his father had purchased a cotton mill. Here he had not only change of air and scene, but a new experience which he afterwards turned to such good account. He acquired a knowledge of all the details of the cotton manufacturing process, and of the quaint and curious technical terms in use amongst the workpeople, many of them survivals from very early times and extremely puzzling to the strange visitor. It was this experience, with his keen powers of observation, which enabled him in his local sketches to pourtray the life, character, manners, and modes of thought of the "mill hand" so sympathetically, and with a vigour, a truthfulness, and a naturalness unapproached by any other writer of the same class. While at Glossop, his old habits clung to him, and when, after the mill had been running for over two years, his father disposed of it, and he returned to his brother's printing office, he fell into the old "vice." He was now over twenty years of age, tall, and rather

slender, but apparently wiry, and certainly exceedingly active. This restless activity, indeed, characterised him throughout life, and probably led him, by overwork, to undermine a constitution apparently predisposed to pulmonary consumption.

After becoming entitled to rank as a journeyman, Mr. JOHN TRAFFORD CLEGG was appointed foreman in his brother's establishment, and this responsible position he occupied for many years. At the age of about twenty-four, he married Miss Flinton, daughter of a farmer of Staxton, Ganton, near York, who survives him with their three children. He had obtained the appointment of organist and choirmaster of St. Mary's Church, Wardleworth, Rochdale, and was now settled down in a comfortable position in life. The tenour of his career was henceforward uneventful, and though occasionally doing some literary work on his own account, in the way of poems and short stories which found acceptance in *Chambers' Journal*, the *Manchester Weekly Times*, and other publications, in later years he was mainly engaged in superintending the production of the works of others, issued from "The Aldine Press." Amongst these was what may be considered Mr. Henry Fishwick's chief work, the "History of the Parish of Rochdale." A considerable portion of this book he put in type with his own hands, and he was very much interested in the whole work. One of the strongest points of Mr. Fishwick's history is the copiousness of the genealogical information relating to local families. It was the perusal of this information which, on the best authority, suggested to Mr. TRAFFORD CLEGG the outlines of his local sketches and stories, which would undoubtedly have appeared in another form had not his attention been directed by a singular accident to his native dialect as perhaps the best and most suitable medium for his purpose. It was a fortunate accident, for it resulted in giving an intensely local colouring to his work, which smacks of the soil, and his characters pass before us absolutely true to the life, expressing their thoughts and feelings in the only language by which they could be adequately conveyed, and whose niceties and subtleties it were impossible to translate into "standard

English." In one of his longer sketches, entitled, "To'ard Ash'oth," the author has acknowledged his indebtedness to Mr. Fishwick in a humourous manner, in language suited to the character of "Th' Owd Weighver." The garrulous weaver of cloth, passing by Oakenrod, in Bury Road, Rochdale, on his way to Ashworth, steps aside to give his companion, "John," some details of the ancient family of Garside or Gartside, much to his surprise, and John thereupon asks:

> "How have you come by all these curious things?"
>
> Th' Owd Weighver replies: "Aw didn't find it i'th' loom-box, tha may be sure. We'n a chap i' th' teawn at's olez scrattin' among owd lumber—a sort o' hee-class rag and bwon picker, an' aw've getten it eaut ov a book he's printed. Gie him a crackt owd gravestwon, a church-book full o' dyeaths an' kessenins, or a bundle o' scrawlt papper covert wi' dust an' eddycrop [spider] neests, an' he's abeaut reet."
>
> John: "He's an antiquary, evidently."
>
> Th' Owd Weighver: "Summat o' that mak."

About half-a-dozen years ago, TRAFFORD CLEGG left his brother's printing office to undertake similar duties for the old Rochdale firm of E. Wrigley and Sons, Limited, letterpress and lithographic printers, and it was not long afterwards that the incident occurred which led him to devote nearly the whole of his spare time to literary work, and at a later period, through the gradual advance of the insidious disease to which he at length succumbed, to rely chiefly upon the productions of his pen for the maintenance of himself and his wife and family of young children. At a Board School prize distribution, in the early part of the year 1890, Mr. J. H. Wylie, M.A., one of H.M. Inspectors of Schools, who was then resident in Rochdale, expressed regret at the decadence of the ancient folk-speech of the district, which is largely due, of course, to the levelling-up influences of our modern educational system, for the school children of to-day are beginning to despise and deride the homely speech of their forefathers as something rude and barbarous. He desired to see more general interest taken in the preservation of the dialect as a living form of our old English tongue, and went so far as to make the somewhat curious suggestion that a reading-book in the dialect should be provided

for use in the schools of Rochdale and the district in which this particular idiom prevails. Inasmuch as the dialect has never been grammatically analysed and reduced to system by anyone having a thorough knowledge of it, and its orthography is in a state of chaotic confusion, to many persons, and Mr. JOHN TRAFFORD CLEGG amongst the number, the proposal seemed Quixotic and impracticable. Even if the first difficulty were overcome and such a book provided, very few schoolmasters or mistresses could be found who have known the dialect from their infancy, and to most of them it is an unknown tongue; and to employ a "native" teacher for the special purpose of teaching the various classes of school children to speak the dialect as it should be spoken would appear ridiculous. Our author keenly criticised the proposal, aptly using the dialect itself to sharpen the edge of his satire. His letters to the newspapers attracted great attention and interest, and they were indeed admirably written. Such was their influence that no attempt has ever been made to give practical effect to Mr. Wylie's suggestion.

Prior to the time of the foregoing incident, Mr. TRAFFORD CLEGG was entirely unknown to his fellow-townspeople as a man of literary talent and aspirations, but the time and circumstances were now combined which were to bring him to public notice and stimulate the natural bent of his mind. The proprietor of the newspaper was so impressed by the merit of his contributions that he invited him to submit "more fruit from the same pannier," to quote an odd phrase of "Tim Bobbin's." The invitation brought forth the brilliant sketches of Lancashire life and character which, with a few others not previously published in serial form, were collectively issued under the title of "Reaund bi th' Derby," the scenes in the leading sketch being chiefly in or near a noted hostelry on the Blackstone Edge range of hills and moors, known by the name of "The Derby." The instalments week by week were eagerly looked for, and the author rapidly made his name as a writer in the dialect amongst those best fitted to judge of the merits

of such work—the men and women of his native district, with whose thoughts and feelings he was thoroughly in sympathy. His other works followed in rapid succession, for he was a most indefatigable writer. Except when his professional duties as a musician required his attention, his daily routine was from the printing office to his desk and from his desk to the printing office, and the hours of night and sleep and rest were often entrenched upon. Such was the vigour of his intellect, notwithstanding his bodily weakness, that the last evening of his earthly life was spent in an endeavour to finish an uncompleted sketch, entitled "Th' Flagged Yard."

His work in the dialect met with unqualified praise from critics, who were unanimous in their opinions of its merit. Such high-class journals as the *London Morning Post*, and *Lloyds' News*, and several of the leading literary journals, gave most highly favourable notices of his first publication, "Reaund bi th' Derby;" and the *Saturday Review* had the following appreciative criticism, which is the highest testimony to the author's abilities: "The author is a Rochdale man, and an acute observer of the humours of Lancashire weavers. His descriptions of rambles about the country, possess the best qualities of sketches. They are full of brightness and life. His verse, too, shows other gifts of the poet than the mere accomplishment of rhyming." This high character is maintained through all the author's productions in the dialect. The scenes are mostly in the neighbourhood of Rochdale, but occasionally the author has travelled farther afield. One of his sketches takes us into the lovely vale of the Calder, and another into the Lake country, and he was evidently well acquainted with the topography and history of the districts traversed. Fine descriptions of natural scenery alternate with life-like portraiture of people met, and delightful digressions into local history and legend. One of his sketches, entitled, "T'other side Rio," tells the story of the up-country experiences in Brazil of two Rochdale men, true types of their class, who went out to fit up a cotton mill; and, like all his sketches, contains many touches of tender

pathos intermixed with the most genuine and innocent humour, for the writer is never coarse, however rollicking the fun.

Apart from their literary merits, the dialectic sketches are of great value as illustrative of the true character of the folk-speech of this corner of South-east Lancashire. The author has aimed at rendering the spelling more uniform, and so as to more accurately convey the correct native pronunciation, which is a matter of extreme difficulty; and he has greatly enriched the glossary of the dialect by the employment of words and terms in common use, which do not occur in the works of other authors. Mr. Ben. Brierley writes on this point: "Had Mr. Clegg lived, he would have been a worthy member of the Lancashire brotherhood of authors. His work has the true ring about it; not that bare, tin-pot stuff so often palmed off for the better thing, but the genuine metal." Mr. Brierley's personal acquaintance with "Th' Owd Weighver" began over the grave of "Tim Bobbin," though he had previously known him by reputation, as Mr. Clegg had by that time made a name in Lancashire literature. The grave of Collier, in the Rochdale Parish Church old graveyard, had long been in a disgracefully neglected condition, and unfenced. Miss M. R. Lahee, another noted Lancashire novelist and writer in the dialect, who has survived "Th' Owd Weighver" by little more than three months, drew public attention to this matter at the centenary of Collier's death, and subsequently, mainly through the exertions of Mr. Benjamin Garside, of Rochdale, a public subscription was made to raise a sufficient sum of money to have the lettering of the memorial stone re-cut, and to fence the grave with an ornamental iron railing upon a stone base. At the same time, the stone, which is laid horizontally on the grave, in accordance with the ancient custom of these parts, was raised a little. When the work was completed, there was a public function, in the nature of a dedication, at which the Ven. Archdeacon Wilson, Vicar of Rochdale, officiated. Amongst those who were assembled at the graveside, were Mr. Ben. Brierley, Miss M. R. Lahee, and Mr. John Trafford Clegg, the only three living

authors in the Lancashire dialect at that time, and whose numbers are now reduced to one. "Th' Owd Weighver" was the youngest, completing the roll on which are inscribed the names of John Collier, Sam. Bamford, Oliver Ormerod, Edwin Waugh, and Sam. Laycock. To Mr. Brierley, now the sole survivor of this brotherhood and sisterhood of eight worthy Lancashire dialect writers, the meeting was a painful one, as he himself says, for he could see by certain signs that death had TRAFFORD CLEGG in his grip, and that he had not long to be amongst us. After the ceremony, during which the Archdeacon very gracefully expressed his appreciation of the merits of "Th' Owd Weighver's" handiwork, Mr. CLEGG accompanied the veteran "Ab o' th' Yate" to the Rochdale Railway Station; and "then (Mr. Brierley writes) I noticed more distinctly the signs that told me consumption had set in. I had lost an only child, a victim of that fell disease, and knew something of its symptoms. I thought then it was the last time I should see him. It was."

Unhappily, the remainder of the story of "Th' Owd Weighver's" life is soon told. He was at length compelled to give up his ordinary occupation, as his medical adviser urged that change of climate was imperative, in order to check the rapid development of the disease and prolong his life, the air of Rochdale being too humid and cold; and Bournemouth, on the south coast, was fixed upon as a suitable place of residence. His sensitive nature could scarcely endure even the temporary severance of old ties, and on the other hand, there was general regret amongst his sympathetic friends and readers at his approaching departure. He knew that his end could not be far distant, and he bore himself with the fortitude and resignation of a Kirke White. He was determined to work on faithfully to the finish, and cheerfully declared that he could write the dialect as well amidst the sombre pines of his new abode as in his native surroundings of breezy moorland and rugged ravine. On his resignation of the appointment of organist of St. Mary's Church, he was presented with a purse of gold, and he left Rochdale with many tokens of friendship and appreciation of

his literary talents. His wife and family soon followed him to Bournemouth, where they took up their residence in Verulam Place. During his enforced exile he made regular visits to Rochdale, and in the summer before his death he had a lengthened stay. In addition to his other work, he had the literary superintendence of this edition of his collected works, and carefully read and revised the proof sheets. The short preface was written by him only a few weeks before his death. The last finishing touches of his pen had been added to the work, and he was looking forward with gratification to the issue of the volume.

The chief of the works of his later days were "David's Loom," of which Messrs. Longman & Co. have published two editions (the second a smaller and cheaper one, which was issued just at the time of his death) and "The Milnes of Whitacre," now in course of serial publication, and, therefore, at present not subject to criticism. The former was his first attempt at writing a full-sized novel, and is in standard English. As a first production, it gave most excellent promise, and the very favourable criticism it received was highly satisfactory and stimulative to the author, who was quite conscious of any defects it might possess from a literary point of view. In some parts the style is florid, which is a fault on the right side in a young writer gifted with a powerful imagination, and time and experience would have corrected the tendency. It is a most readable story, original in plot and sympathetic in treatment. In it the author accomplished the task which he had set before himself, the narration of a romance and tragedy in humble life, which is a perfectly true picture, and not a high-flown and unnatural conception or an impossible ideal. In this novel occur two passages which have a melancholy interest in the light of the event which they presage with such pathetic resignation. The author writes:

> "I have seen robust men shudder at the thought of death, while for me the grizzly tyrant has no terrors. How comes that? Is it because my feeble grasp of life can more easily be loosed? Assuredly strong men discover no greater happiness in life than I have done. I would

not exchange my infirmity, tolerably quiet conscience, and reflective habit, for the paltry hopes, gross ideals, earthbound visions, petty anxieties of many active fellow-creatures within my range of acquaintance. Thirty years of life have been granted to me. I am thankful, recognising well that I have really lived longer than some who attain twice my age; yet I could not desire that weary length of days to be repeated.

Of late my fragile powers have waned. Carefully as my dear ones endeavour to conceal their knowledge, I am satisfied that palpable symptoms of decay are apparent in my frame. The acute perception of which I have so often boasted cannot entirely delude me. In very few years at most, possibly within a period to be measured only by months, this transient body must fulfil its term on earth."

This prophecy was fulfilled on Monday, the 18th of March, 1895, when he had reached the age of thirty-eight years. He and his wife and family were at Bournemouth at the time, and the end came rather unexpectedly. He had passed safely through the exceptionally severe weather of the previous two months of the new year, but in the earlier part of the winter he had a rather severe attack of pleurisy and pneumonia, which perhaps hastened the fatal termination. He passed away calmly and peacefully, and was perfectly conscious till the supreme moment. The unexpected news of his death was received in Rochdale and district with the deepest regret, and amongst the numerous letters of condolence and sympathy received by the family was a very kind one from the Venerable Archdeacon Wilson. The remains were laid to rest in the beautiful Cemetery at Bournemouth on the 21st of March, and a masonic badge was placed on the coffin and lowered with it into the grave. The badge was sent by the St. Chad's Lodge of Freemasons, Rochdale, of which he had been a member, and for which it is said that he wrote and composed hymns which are in regular use. It is intended to place a private memorial to mark his grave, which, though far away from the humble village of his birth, is a fitting resting-place for the mortal remains of such a true lover of all that is beautiful in nature.

HEART-STHRENGS:

A Tale o' Yelley Clough.

I.

ON th' creawn ov a wooded hill o'erlookin Yelley Clough there used to ston a little breek cottage. It doesn't matther when, but yo wain't find it neaw iv yo looken o day. It were afore th' moor-born springs, clear an' cowd, had bin ruin't wi' fullin shops an' dyeworks, an' i' thoose days th' brook sported deawn among th' rocks clen an' pure as picthers i' glass. Still deep pools rested i' nooks an' hollows o' th' wayther-worn stones, like quiet folk stonnin back fro' th' whirl an' clatther o' life, blazin red i' th' sun an' shinin cowd white i' th' moon, takkin colour fro sky an' cleaud, throwin back every one it own little copy o' three, bush an' bonk, an' showin clear on it flagged floor every speck o' sond an' bit o' gravel. But there were no quietness i' th' main channel, for theere t' wayther jumped, slurred, danced, cobbed itsel yeadfirst deawn steep heights, grumbled reaund boudhers 'at wouldn't shift eaut ov it road, slippin smooth for a sondy yard neaw an' again to breighk at th' end on't in a spray-dash o' sheawerin silver. Creepin deawn to th' oozy edges coome a carpet o' livin green, wick wi busy theausands o' winged an' legged little objects, hardly to be sin beaut a magnifier. Snow-dhrop an' primrose followed hard upo' th' spring thaw; thorn-blossom, bluebell an' dog rose throde close on their heels, mixin wi th' deep scent ov hud violets; dandelion sthruck fire wi it red yure, soon to dhrop i' white ashes fro it bare pow, whol t' breath o' new-mown hay steeped o th' windin dingle, an' tendher fern shoots pept fro every cool shelf an' nook, afore long to be crommed thick wi their sweepin fithers o' sorted green. Hee aboon, thick groves o' threes laid their branchy yeads together, sometimes roofin o th' glen wi their quiverin wynt-blown arches, turnin it into a greight church, ringin wi music fro sich choristhers as brass could never buy; sometimes shakin their bare bwons wi a grim rattle, as th' freezin blast went swirlin through, dhrivin snow-sheet an' full-swelled brook deawn th' stone-ribbed clough wi a thundherin seaund; but whether i' th' time o' green shoots or harvestin, wizen't winther or lusty summer, that lonesome spot geet things middlin weel to itsel. Seldom coome feet o' folk

Yelley, Healey. *Slurred*, slid. *Cobbed*, threw. *Beaut*, without.

theere among dewy fleawer-beds or piles o' wither't levs; fro year end to year end there were little to disturb brid or rabbit; everything stood as it 'd bin turn't fro th' shapin touch o' th' Maker ov us o, an' everything—brids in a theausand songs, threes wi their fluttherin banners, brook full o' glistenin e'en—filled th' end bi wisdom planned for it, an' helped to crom that rare nook wi sweetness an' beauty.

Th' cottage were hutched up undher elm, beech, an' saplin branches, an' it fronted seauth, so onybody could look fro th' windows an' watch th' owd sun at his wark fro mornin to neet, an' see o 'at went on deawn i' Shayclough. Th' place had bin lyin empty mony a year, when one day two folk coome that road 'at wanted a heause badly, so they took it sthraight off an' set th' chimbley reechin again. These folk were bwoth young. They were mon an' wife, an' as poor as crows; or wur, happen, for crows *are* middlin sure o' summat t'eight. Th' husbant 'd be thirty year owd at that time, an' his wife tuthri year younger, an' he'd bin blint fro birth. He could do nowt at o nobbut play a fiddle, an' he kept hissel so busy at that job 'at he'd no time for owt else. He *could* play, too, aboon a bit, an' met ha' made some brass by it iv he'd had gumption enough; but he never did make mich, an' seemed content wi a slice o' loaf an' rags.

Whatever made his wife tak him nobry could tell, iv it weren't clen eaut o' pity for him—some women are that road, thinkin nowt o' theirsel an' everything ov other folk—but hoo'd getten him upo' some tack, an' paid th' weddin expenses beside, an' theere they were, like two robins in a neest—as helpless an' as happy.

Th' fiddler were soon weel known o reaund th' neighbourhood, an' wi playin at heauses an' sthreet corners he managed to scrat eaut a livin, sich as it were. He'd olez a little tarrier wi him in a bant, an' he talked to it an' loved it just as iv it 'd bin a Christian; but he loved everybody an' everything for that matther, for he were as sweet-temper't, gentle-hearted a chap as ever were born.

Docthor Cooper, at Brodely, were just thinkin o' shappin for bed one April neet when he yerd a greight splutther eautside, an' then a knock at th' dur.

"What now?" thought t' docthor. "There's somebody in a hurry there, or I'm much mistaken."

He oppen't th' dur an' seed it were th' fiddler an' his dog. "Now, Simon!" he said. "You have come down from your wooded pillar, unlike your great namesake who perched on his until they grew together. What's the matter?"

Wur, worse. *Tuthri*, two or three. *Nobbut*, only.
Gumption, acuteness.

"Eh, docthor! do come!" th' fiddler panted eaut, wi what rovins o' wynt he had left. "Yo mun come! Mi wife's some ill to-neet."

T' docthor laughed. "That's it, is it? I've been expecting that some time."

"Han yo for sure! Eh, but hoo's some ill, mon! Run away wi yo; dunnot wait for me."

T' docthor bowted off an' Simon followed him.

"You fetch Mrs. Brierley from the next farm, and then stop down in the kitchen and fiddle," t' docthor towd him; an' o neet long t' tuneful sthrengs were gooin, relievin Simon's throubl't heart. Abeaut four o' t' clock next mornin Mrs. Brella coome deawn stairs wi summat lapped in a blanket, an said,

"O's reet neaw, Simon; tha's a fine daughther here. Tha cawn't see it, poor fellah! but give it a buss, an' mind for breighkin it."

"God bless it!" t' fayther said, puttin his lips to it tendher cheek. "But heaw's mi wife?"

"Hoo's reet enough, lad; dunnot thee bother thysel. It's nobbut what o women han to go through. There'll be another meauth to keep neaw, so tha m' be gettin forrad wi thi fiddlin."

"There'll be some road done," Simon said, wipin his e'en, "an' what 'll keep two 'll keep three. Iv onybody has to clem it wain't be th' babby."

"Well, well! Yo'n no need to bother abeaut clemmin whol yo'n tuthri neighbours left wick. Tha'rt a very dacent chap, tha knows, iv a bit soft, an' thi wife's bwoth a fawse un an' a good un."

"Hoo is that, bless her! What aw should do beaut her God knows. Cawn't aw goo up stairs an' have a word wi her, Mrs. Brella?"

"Eh! tha mun ax Cooper that. These docthors han it o their own road at these mak o' times."

Heawever he'd no 'casion to ax, for t' docthor coome deawn-stairs in a bit an' ordher't him up. "She's all right now, Simon," he says; "but keep her quiet until she gets stronger."

"Well, aw'm mich obleeged to yo, docthor, aw'm sure; an' when aw con pay yo t' Lord knows."

"Wait till I send your bill in," said Cooper, an' Simon crept upstairs.

"Iv aw catch yo sendin bills here aw'll tak o mi custom off yo," Mrs. Brella said. "We'll o goo to th' Whitoth docthors or somewheere."

"That would be an expensive business for me. Let's see! is it half-a-crown or five shillings you have paid me in the last ten years?"

Hoo, she (evolved thus: she, shô, shoo, hoo).
Fawse, clever.

"It were three-an'-sixpence, an' a dyel too mich; for it were nobbut eaur Billy 'at geet a peigh up his nose. Nowe! there's bin little docthorin at eaur heause, to say there's eleven on us. But we'll make eaursels ill o' purpose afore we'll miss plaguin yo a bit."

"There'll be no need, Susan. Listen to me, now, and whisper. That poor woman upstairs is death-stricken. She may live two years, or perhaps three, but certainly not five. What do you think of that?"

"Think on it," whimpered th' warm-hearted neighbour, layin th' chilt deawn, an' puttin her appron to her e'en. "Eh! what a weary job is this! Whatever win they do! Whatever win they do!"

"Upon my soul," said Cooper, "we doctors see and hear things that would rend iron or melt brass, and commonplace as life is here we stumble every day upon tragedies too painful to think of. It is a sad case."

"Whatever con we do? Con a London docthor do t' poor thing ony good? becose iv so——"

"No living man can save her, Susan. It is a mere question of time."

"Poor things! It wain't bide thinkin o'er. Docthor! whatever yo done, not a word o' this to oather on 'em!"

"Quite right, Susan; we will keep the secret between us. You will manage without me now, so I'll get to bed."

Upstairs th' blint chap were kneelin at th' bedside, one arm reaund his wife's neck, an' they were as happy as two childher.

"Isn't hoo a little beauty!" th' poor wife whisper't. "But aw'm forgettin tha cawn't see her, an' never will."

"Dunnot fret thisel for that, Rachel. Iv th' chilt couldn't see me there met ha bin summat to cry o'er. Aw con touch her, an' yer her, an' love her just as weel beaut e'en as wi; an' tha con tell me what hoo's like as hoo groos up, so one pair ov e'en 'll fit us bwoth."

"Bless her little bonny face! Aw wish Susan 'd be sharp an' bring her back. Th' chilt 'll groo up to love us an' be company for us i' th' heause, an' we s' o be as happy as con be."

"Plez God," said Simon.

II.

T' next three year were th' happiest part o' th' blint chap's life. He shapped abeaut to make a bit moore brass nor he'd bother't to get afore, an' were oft away fro wom a whol day at a time, scrattin a livin eaut o' th' hollow timber; an' when he geet back at neet

Dyel, deal. *Eaur* is pronounced "ar." *Wom*, home.

theere were his wife, wi smiles he could never see, but love he could olez feel—an' th' babby, warm an' slavvery, to scrawm abeaut him, daub his face wi weet butthercake, an' fill his yure wi crumbs. He'd summat else to do then nor dhrem o his time away o'er th' fiddle. Poor Simon!

T' docthor's warnin were nobbut too thrue. It were very soon sin 'at Rachel were wastin away, an' hoo weren't long i' findin it eaut hersel. Everybody knew obbut Simon; he could see nowt, an' folk were careful to tell him nowt, an' his wife had takken to her bed afore he ever dhremt aught ailed her. Th' end were very near then, an coome on him wi double weight. When they towd him hoo were dyead he flew up just like a madman.

"Curse yo o!" he skriked. "Iv aw'd known i' time this could ne'er have happen't. A bitther curse on yo every one, 'at 'd use a poor blint chap so! Aw cawn't live beaut her; done yo yer, yo wasthrels? Yo'n kil't her among yo! Oh, God, 'at made these seetless e'en, breighk up their hard hearts 'at could punish me so, an' make 'em feel theirsel what aw suffer; an' tak me away soon fro this world, where aw've naught to live for moore!"

"Dunnot talk so, mi poor lad," Mrs. Brella said, takkin th' chilt to him an' settin her on his knee. "Isn't there summat here to live for?"

"Ah! poor chilt, thi best friend's gwone. Heaw oft han we talked on thee grooin up to be a comfort an' a blessin to us, an' heaw are o t' bonny picthers we made cobbed deawn an' brokken! My little lamb! Oh, for mi seet! Just one minute, Lord! Gie me just one look at her 'at's loved me so weel, an' bin o th' leet aw ever knew i' this world! One look at mi dyead wife, afore hoo's laid away for ever! But nowe! th' heavens are dark an' cowd, an' t' yearth's black o reaund me; an' aw mun sit helpless an' be punished whol mi heart cracks i' mi body!"

"Theere, theere!" said Mrs. Brella in a brokken voice, puttin th' chilt's arms reaund his neck. "Kiss him, mi beauty, an' love him, an' be a good chilt to him, for tha'rt o he has i' th' world neaw. That's reet, lad! let t' wayther come."

Th' little tarrier coome pawin reaund him, an' nuzzlin at his hond, so th' poor fellah sthroked it an' cried o'er it for a while. "Aw've nobbut thee to tell mi saycrets too neaw, Pincher, an' tha con say nowt back; but tha's moore wit nor some 'at con talk."

They geet him at his fiddle afther a time, an' he made 'em o cry wi th' mournful music he geet eaut on it, as iv he were playin on his own heart-sthrengs; but it sattl't him an' did him good, an' i' tuthri days he were as quiet as ever. His little lass had turned four year owd; hoo were a sharp, bonny little thing, an' rare company for him. Some o' th' neighbours offered to lodge 'em whol t' daughther geet owd enough to shap things hersel, but Simon 'd stir noane.

Yure, hair.

"What, lev this heause wheere my Rachel dee'd?" he said. "Yo mun tak me feet first when that happens."

So th' neighbours shapped for him among 'em, for there were plenty o' good souls abeaut; an' theere he lived wi his chilt an' his dog for mony a year, carin for nowt an' nobry. Little Rachel soon larnt to manage her heause-wark, an' afore hoo were ten year owd looked quite motherly. Her fayther never geet his owd cheerfulness back, but he sattl't quietly deawn to his wark, an' were never yerd to grumble.

Mony a happy heaur they spent wandherin abeaut th' owd clough, an' little Rachel 'd talk ov everything hoo could see, tellin her fayther heaw pale th' ash levs were beside th' dark elms, heaw fithery t' willow bushes looked, and heaw th' big oaks set their feet into th' greaund as iv they'd say, "Come on here, an' have a do; tha'll shift noane o' me." Then they'd o th' fleawers to go through, an' Simon soon knew 'em bi feel an' smell, but th' colour were too mich for him. Rachel had mony a thry to teighch him what red an' green looked like, but her time were nobbut wasted. He could soon pike th' brids eaut bi their different notes, an' geet some bits ov ideas abeaut their size and build; an' otogether he geet so fawse i' tuthri year 'at he hardly missed his e'en at o.

Then for a change they'd sit i' th' clough, watchin an' hearkenin t' wayther cob itsel deawn wi splash an' rattle, an' t' fayther 'd tell o' th' fairies 'at used to live i' t' Thrutch, snug i' their stone-delved heauses undher t' fo'in brook, an' make rings i' th' meadows every full moon; or he'd tune up his fiddle an' teem o maks o' solemn music eaut on't, dhremin away for heaurs, an' fillin his daughther's yead wi picthers ov armed chaps sweighin i' battle, o' th' wide ocean turnin reaund th' world like a greight wayther-wheel, o' th' sun shinin upo far counthries full o' fleawers an' oranges, o' quiet moonleet winther neets, an' o' th' restless hommer o' human life olez bangin away to breighk deawn th' rock-beds 'at shut it in, but never gettin no nar; an' so they lived, an' loved, an' were content iv not otogether happy, whol Rachel shot up into a woman, an' were nineteen year owd.

III.

Tuthri young chaps i' th' neighbourhood o' Yelley had thried hard to get thick wi Rachel, but hoo'd ne'er naught to say to 'em. One young farmer co'd Jim Crabtree were determined to have her, soon or lat. He'd axed her a time or two to wed him, but hoo wouldn't; so Jim geet thick wi th' owd chap, coome to be a reglar visithor i' t' little cottage, an' bided his time. He'd abeaut

Fo'in, falling. *Nar*, nearer.

HEALEY CLOUGH.

as mich ear for music as a deawn-speaut, an' o tunes seaunded alike to him; but he'd wit enough to keep on Simon's soft side, an' crack his fiddlin up o he could.

"Eh! that's grand!" Jim 'd say every time th' owd chap stopped. "What done yo co it?"

Then Simon 'd set to an' give him a long nominy abeaut th' piece, th' time it were written, an' th' life o' t' composer; just what Jim wanted, for it left him free to watch Rachel, an' think ov owt he'd a mind. When th' tale were done he'd say, "Come, fayther, give us just another scrat o' th' bant;" an' off Simon 'd brast wi some moore grand stuff. It fair capped Jim to see heaw th' music geet howd o' bwoth Rachel an' her fayther. Th' owd fellah went off into a wakken dhrem when his sthrengs chirped, lyin back in his cheer wi a far-off look in his seetless e'en, as iv he're starin at a world eautside this; an' let Rachel be as busy as hoo met wi her heausewark, hoo'd oft stop an' ston hearkenin—not so mich at th' fiddle, Jim thought, but moore like as iv hoo expected a seaund comin through t' slate, or th' window.

"What the hangment ails 'em!" th' young farmer used to wondher. "Aw con yer nowt, nobbut th' fiddle-bant twittherin like a clatch o' tewits. There's summat noane gradely abeaut this."

He ne'er fund it eaut whol he lived, an' olez felt just a tinge o' good temper't scorn for their babby wark; but he were careful to keep that to hissel, an' they o geet on very weel together.

"It's rare an' good on thee, Jimmy," Simon said one neet, "to sit here for company to a poor blint chap like me. There's noane so mony young fellahs 'd bother theirsel."

Rachel flushed up, an' Jim smil't at her an' said: "Aw've olez bin a good lad—mi mother tells everybody th' same tale—so, yo see, its naught eaut o' my road."

"Tha'rt a good lad neaw, as heaw't be," th' fiddler said. "Isn't he, Rachel?"

"Aw think he is," t' daughther said, smoothin th' owd chap's silky yure off his foryead. "A very good lad."

"Aw'm ne'er likely to be nowt else whol aw've a characther to loise wi thee, Rachel. Tha con make me oather good or bad, just as tha's a mind."

"What! is it so? Simon co'd eaut. "An' what says little Rachel to that?"

"Little Rachel says nowt; becose there's an owd fayther 'at loves her, an' 'at Rachel loves, an' there's no reawm in her mind for nobody else."

"But, mi bonny fleawer, tha munnot loise thi comfort an' pleasur i' livin for th' sake o' me," said th' fiddler, pressin her hond i' bwoth his own. "There'll be some road done."

Nominy, homily. *Tewits*, plovers.

"Con yo spare me so yezzy, then, fayther?"

"Aw cawn't spare thee at o, mi little lass; but tha'rt noane beau n to cob thi life away doddherin afther an owd chap like me. Iv tha wants Jimmy tak him, an' ha done wi't."

"Neaw Rachel!" said th' young farmer. "There's a good wom an' a lovin husband waitin for th' shake o' thi finger; an' thi fayther shall be moore comfortable nor ever he's bin afore. There's reawm i' th' ingle-nook for him an' his fiddle too, an' he con sit theere whol he's played o th' tunes o'er again 'at ever aw've yerd slur off his fingers. They'll be o fresh again neaw;" an' Jim grinned to hissel, knowin weel enough 'at iv he yerd a tune played a theausand times on a barrel-orgin it'd ne'er stick in *his* yead.

"Is there no moore lasses 'at'll do for thee, Jimmy?" axed th' fiddler. "Lasses are welly o alike, mon, iv tha con nobbut think so."

"Iv aw'd wanted one o' t'other aw shouldn't ha com'n here," says Jim. "Neaw Rachel?"

"Nowe, it con never happen, James. Aw've towd thee afore."

"What faurt doesta find wi him, lass?" her fayther axed.

"Noane at o. Aw like him very weel; but noane weel enough to wed him."

"But tha'll keep likin me betther t'longer tha knows me," Jim said. "Beside, iv there's aught abeaut me 'at suits noane it con be awther't."

Rachel nobbut wagged her yead an' laughed.

"There's nobry else i' th' road, is there?" axed Simon.

"Nowe!" said Rachel; but Jim seed her flush an' look a bit bother't, an' he thought to hissel, "What a foo aw've bin! Somebry's spokken for her."

A tuthri neets afther that he coome slap across th' young woman walkin wi a fellah deawn th' glen, an' when he seed who th' chap were he clicked his teeth an' swore. When Rachel geet wom Jim were theere, waitin for her an' keepin th' owd fellah company; an' afther a bit o' meemawin talk th' young farmer axed her to walk eautside wi him a minute. Hoo threw a shawl o'er her yead an' went wi him to th' clough edge; an' they stood for a bit watchin th' moonleet among th' branches, an' hearkenin th' tumblin brook far below. Then Crabtree took her bi th' hond an' said: "Rachel, aw love thee as mich as one mon con love a woman, an' aw'll do owt obbut dee for thee; aw wain't goo that length. Aw met thee to-neet wi one o' th' biggest wasthrels i' this parish——"

"Co him behinnd his back, do!"

"It's nobbut what aw've towd him to his face afore neaw," Jim went on, keepin his temper. "Mi lass, iv aw'm noane good

Yezzy, easy. *Beaun* (bound), going. *Welly*, well-nigh.

enough for thee get another honest mon fro somewheere, but never let me see thee again wi a sceaundhrel like yon."

"Tha nobbut 'buses him becose aw like him betther nor thee!"

"Tha knows me too weel to believe that, Rachel. Iv aw con see thee happy it'll be reet for me, an' aw s' noather dhreawn nor shoot misel. But yon Tom Cherrick 'll ruinate thee as sure as my name's what it is."

"Aw'm weel able to tak care o' misel," said Rachel. "Aw should ne'er ha thought tha were so spiteful as tha turns eaut to be."

Hoo left him at that, an' Jim rubbed his e'en a bit, thought a middlin lot, an' then went wom to bed.

Cherrick met him tuthri days afther an' says, "What are all these lies you have been telling about me?"

"Lies!" says Jim, takkin him bi th' scuft o' t' neck. "Wilta co *me* a liar?" He punced him across t' road, an' said "What hasta getten to say next?"

But Cherrick had nowt to say. He pyched off quiet enough, an' left Jim grindin his teeth an' muttherin to hissel, "Hoo's less wit nor aw reckon't on to tell this foo o aw said."

For th' next six month young Crabtree went very little to th' fiddler's cottage, an' seed nowt o' Rachel; but hay-time coome reaund, an' Simon an' his daughther were axed to th' heausin supper at th' farm, wheere they o met again. Th' young farmer could hardly believe his e'en when he seed Rachel. Her cheeks were white an' sunken, hoo'd big rings reaund her e'en, an' when hoo thried to smile it were enough to make onybody cry to watch her.

There were a bit o' sport at th' supper. Th' mowers gated threpin as usal to sattle which were th' best mon, an' whether Irish or English could do most wark; but they could nobbut agree abeaut one thing, an' that were 'at Jim were th' best mower ever fund in a hayfielt, an' as good a maisther as ever stepped. Th' Yelley parson were theere, an' he read 'em a hymn he'd written hissel. It were myent for th' corn-heausin, he said, but were good enough for haytime too.

HARVEST HYMN.

Almighty Lord, whose open hand
Pours down all blessings that we know,
Whose power strikes deep across the land
Where rustling harvests wave and blow.

To Thee our thanks and gifts we bring,
Assembled in Thy worship here;
To Thee our heartful songs we sing,
Before Thee kneel in solemn prayer.

Gated threpin, began disputing. *Myent*, meant.

The seasons, linked in endless chain,
The fruits of valley, plain and hill,
Tempest and sunshine, drought and rain,
Are governed by Thy sovereign will.

When Winter locks the shuddering earth
In iron bonds, and roofs the sea,
We tremble not in fear of dearth,
Knowing 'tis but a sign from Thee.

When Spring leaps forth, and all the ground
With shoots of green is thickly set,
Our hearts with exultation bound
To see Thy love is with us yet.

Gay Summer smiles upon the corn,
That deepens to a golden hue,
Ripe berries hang on every thorn,
The flowers are steeped in early dew.

Then mellow Autumn, ripening all,
The garners fills, the fields lays bare:
Lord, let us here before Thee fall
In thanks for mercies through the year.

Oh! when Thou reapest, at the last,
This world's wide field of human grain,
And we, the Spring and Summer past,
In Autumn turn to earth again,

Garner our souls in heaven, we pray;
Or, if we be unworthy now,
Send rain and sun upon our way
That we may ripen as we grow.

"An' that's one o' yor own, is it?" says Jim. "It's noane a bad un, noather; a bit classical, happen, for haymakers. Neaw, Thatcher! another shive o' beef, lad? Tha's nobbut had three plateful yet."

"Well, thank yo kindly. It doesn't come every week."

"Tha'rt reet; an' it's a good job, too, for we should soon run eaut o' beeas at this rate. Help thisel to cabbitch an' pottatoes. Make yorsel a-wom, o on yo. Neaw, mother! heaw are yo gettin on at yor end?"

"We're doin very weel, James, an' lookin afther eaursel. Ne'er mind us."

"That's reet. As aw were sayin, parson, yor poethry's a bit too dainty an' weel-donned for these wortchin chaps. They liken a song wi wartay clooas an' clogs on; summat o' this mak:—

Beeas, beasts. *Wartay*, workday.

A MOWER'S SONG.

Aw clipped a mease i'th' mowin fielt;
Rip, breet scye!
It scutther't o' one side, an' squeal't;
Rip, breet scye!
Aw shived a layrock neest away,
An throde two speckl't eggs i'th' clay—
For th' bonny brid a weary day!
Rip, breet scye!

A rabbit showed his tuft o' white,
Rip, breet scye!
An' shiver't in his jacket tight;
Rip, breet scye!
An owd black crow coome swirlin reaund
To root an' pike i'th' clen-shaved greaund,
An' sauced us wi a raspin seaund;
Rip, breet scye!

Tall grase fell low afore eaur feet,
Rip, breet scye!
Wi mony a blossom, sparklin weet;
Rip, breet scye!
An' o'er that green an' fleawery bed
Ripe sorrel sprinkl't dhrops o' red,
An' clover dhrooped it scented yead.
Rip, breet scye!

We buckled to like lusty folk,
Rip, breet scye!
An' sunset showed us th' endin sthroke;
Rip, breet scye!
But late i'th' neet we raked away,
An' selvaged part o'th' dark to day;
Cowd moonleet's good for makin hay.
Rip, breet scye!

Next mornin th' sun coome ragin wot,
Rest, dull scye!
An warm't o th' grase for gettin cut;
Rest, dull scye!
Then up we dhrove wi wheel an' cowt,
An' soon made th' breawn-baked thrusses bowt;
An' neaw we'n twelvemonth stock i'th' fowt.
Rest, dull scye!"

"Hear, hear!" Thatcher sang eaut. "Henco'er! henco'er!"

"O reet, lads," says Jim, laughin. "What are yo pooin sich a face at, Simon? Han yo getten t' toothwartch?"

"Nowe, Jimmy! Nowe! But we'll ha no moore singin, iv tha's a mind."

"Oh! that's it, is it?" Mrs. Crabtree said. "Well, we ne'er reckon't to be singers i' eaur family, an' aw do believe Jim's th' warst o' t' lot."

Pooin, pulling.

IV.

Next neet Jim went up to th' fiddler's cottage, an' fund th' owd brid sawin away wi his bow; Rachel sittin very quiet in a corner.

"Tha'rt welcome, Jimmy," Simon said, layin th' owd fiddle in it box as tendherly as iv it 'd bin a babby. "Tha doesn't give us mich o' thi time neaw."

"Aw've like had a dyel o' wark latly. Heaw are yo bwoth gettin on?"

"Aw'm reet enough misel, lad; but there's summat wrong wi Rachel, aw deaubt."

"Fayther!" th' lass co'd eaut, jumpin up wi a freeten't look.

"Come here, mi pratty blossom," Simon said, sthretchin his arm toard her; so hoo went an' took his hond, an' bent o'er his cheer. "It's God's will 'at aw mun never see mi own chilt, moore precious to me nor o th' world beside; but aw'm noane dyeaf iv aw'm blint. Rachel, heaw is it tha never sings as tha used to do?"

"It mun be becose aw never think abeaut it."

"Tha used to sing beaut thinkin, same as a brid. Jimmy, just look at this lass an' tell me what hoo's like."

"What hoo's like?"

"Ah! Thry thi hond at porthrait-paintin for once, an' tell me heaw hoo's lookin."

Rachel looked at th' young farmer eaut ov her weet e'en, an' put a warnin finger up. Jim nodded, an' gated lyin, like a steaut Englishman as he were.

"Hoo's nobbut a little lass, Simon—just abeaut big enough to lay her yead on my shooldher, iv hoo nobbut would do. Hoo's leet an' thrim as ony fairy ever sin i' this clough; hoo's plump an' reaunt, wi red cheeks, curly breawn toppin, an' laughin blue e'en—"

"They're noane laughin neaw, are they?" axed Simon, brushin his delicate fingers across his daughther's face. "It's a rainy mak o' sunshine, is this! Rachel, mi lass, what is it?"

"It's nowt 'at matthers, fayther. Dunnot tak on abeaut it."

"Who's dar'd to hurt thee?" axed Simon. "Done folk think tha'rt to be put on becose aw'm blint?"

"Nowe, nowe!"

"What's wrong, mi heart's fleawer?" Simon axed again, takkin her to his breast. "Dunnot keep saycrets fro me, Rachel. Aw've nowt to live for but to make thee happy, an' iv owt happen't thee it 'd be my dyeath, as sure as we ston here."

Rachel went into a wild storm o' cryin, but hoo'd say nowt. Hoo took th' owd chap back to his cheer, an' sit deawn in her corner again, an' th' farmer started talkin abeaut his crops. He took th' lass eautside wi him when he went, walked wi her a piece through t' wood, an' then stopped an' said,

"Neaw, Rachel, let's have this eaut. Just think aw'm thi brother, an tell me what's to do."

"It's nowt, James."

"Don't lie that road to me. What's made thee so white, an' thin, an' freeten't-lookin sin' aw seed thee tuthri month back? It's weel thi fayther cawn't see heaw his fleawer's fadin."

Rachel brasted eaut cryin, an' Jim had to put his arm reaund her to howd her up. Then hoo said, "It's moore nor a month sin' Tom coome near me."

"That's naught to cry o'er."

"Aw see him at church every Sunday, but he wain't look at me."

"Oh! he gwoes to church reglar, does he?"

"He swore to wed me this spring; an iv he doesn't there's nowt but shame an' ruin afore us. Mi poor fayther!"

"Aw'll kill him!" said Jim, wi shut neighves an' blazin e'en. "May God send deawn o' that curst breed——"

Rachel put her hond o'er his meauth an' stopped him, an' he raged abeaut th' hill top like a wild thing. Then another fit took him, an' deep sobs broke fro his big heart. "Nay, Rachel! Deein's a foo to this! What will thi fayther do when he knows? But he never mun know—we mun keep it fro him at o risks. Nay, Rachel!"

"Oh, James! iv aw'd nobbut takken notice o' thee!"

"It's rayther too lat to talk o' that neaw. Well! what's to be done?"

"Tom mun oather wed me soon or aw'll dhreawn misel."

"He shall wed thee next week. Go wom an' rest quietly; get thi frock ready, put some bloom on thi cheeks, an' it 'll o come reet."

"Oh, Jim! An' afther t' road aw've used thee! But tha'll never get him to come."

"Get him!" says Jim, shakin his sthrong arm. "Iv he says two words to me aw'll twist his neck. A dammed villain!"

"Hush!" said Rachel, "tha munnot hurt him, for aw love him."

"Love him!" grunted th' farmer. "A bonny thing is this women's love! It's naught to brag o'er when aw tell thee aw'm woth hawve a dozen Tom Cherricks; but when tha'd th' chance ov a gradely mon nowt 'd do but cobbin thisel away on a little heaunt like yon, 'at thinks o' nowt but th' fit ov his jacket an' th' shape ov his finger nails."

"Aw've used thee very badly, James."

"Well, aw'm nobbut another to th' rook. Goo an' shap thi weddin-geawn."

Neighves, fists. *Gradely*, real. *Rook*, ruck.

V.

"Aw wondher what time these fashionables getten up," Jim thought to hissel o'er his breakfast next mornin. "Up o neet an' i' bed o day, aw sh' think—same as eawls. They're abeaut as fawse too, an' as blint to th' dellit. It'll be no use gooin afore eleven o' t' clock or so, shuzheaw; aw'll goo up an' fettle yon shippon dur a bit."

Between eleven an' twelve he were knockin at a big fine heause just aboon Shayclough.

"Is Tum Cherrick in?" he says, when th' sarvant coome.

"Yes, sir; but he is engaged."

"That matthers nowt," Jim said, sthridin forrad. "Tell him aw've com'n."

"I daren't disturb him, sir; he is with his father in the drawing-room."

"This front reawm, dost myen? O reet, lass, aw'll disturb him mysel."

He knocked at th' reawm dur, oppen't it, an' went sthraight in. Owd Cherrick had bin talkin very leaud, but he stopped when th' dur oppen't, an' beaunced eaut ov his cheer; an' th' son sit still on a three-corner't sofy, lookin very deawn i' t' meauth.

"Mornin!" Jim said, layin his billycock on th' table, an' starin hard at 'em bwoth.

"You are intruding, Mr. Crabtree," said th' owd chap.

"Aw coome o' purpose."

"We have some very particular business to transact, and if you will call at another time I shall be obliged."

"Aw've some business moore particlar nor yors," said th' farmer. "Aw'm com'n a tellin this lad o' yors to be ready for gettin wed next week."

Young Cherrick beaunced up at that, an' Jim poo'd a cheer up an' sit him deawn.

"What tomfoolery's this!" th' owd chap snarled, stampin reaund as iv he cared nowt abeaut th' price ov his grand carpet.

"This fine son o' yors has ruin't th' fiddler's daughther up Yelley Clough, an' he's beaun to get wed to her next week."

"You don't mean Simon Leach's girl?"

"Th' same!"

"Can this be true, Tom?"

But Thomas said nowt. He looked middlin sheepish, an' walked to th' window.

"Aw don't think he con tell to an odd un," th' farmer said, wi a dhry look at him; "there's bin so mony."

"Is this true, Tom!" his fayther axed again.

Shuzheaw, however.

"It's too true," Thomas says, starin very hard into th' garden.

"This connection must cease immediately," th' owd fellah splutther't. "As I told you just now, you shall marry our neighbour's daughter, and keep the properties together, or I will disown you."

"Isn't he big enough to live bi hissel?" axed Jim.

"Don't make foolish remarks, Crabtree. Go and tell these people at once that nothing can be done for them."

"Iv aw do yon lass 'll dee; an' what abeaut her blint fayther, then, done yo think?"

"It's no concern of mine, I tell you. The girl's no better than she should be, I expect."

"Yo expect naught o' th' sort," Jim said, "becose yo known her too weel. Say another word again her an' aw'll dust yor jacket wi this whip-stock, whether yo're owdher nor me or not."

"Well, you're right, and I beg your pardon. She is a decent girl enough, no doubt; and I am extremely sorry for what has happened."

"Let's sattle abeaut this weddin, then. What day next week 'll suit thee, Tum?"

"But this is preposterous!" th' owd chap said, fairly gaspin for wynt at Jim's cool impidence. "You must see the thing is quite impossible."

"Mi e'en are good yet, but aw cawn't otogether see that."

"Consider the difference in position."

"Last time yo put up for th' ceauncil yo towd us i' one o' yor speeches 'at we were o made o' th' same stuff."

"This woman is quite uneducated."

"Teighch her. Hoo's young enough to larn."

"The father is a mere pauper."

"He never begged in his life; but yo'n brass enough to keep him, shuzheaw."

"My son must marry Miss Butterworth, our neighbour's daughter."

"Aw'll co theere on mi road wom an' tell her abeaut this job, an' see iv hoo'll wed him afther that."

"You will never do that, Crabtree! You dare not!"

"Yo s' go wi me an' see, iv yo'n a mind. Will Monday suit thee, Tum?"

"No! nor any other day," t' fayther said. "He will never marry her with my consent."

"He con happen shap beaut that iv he gets a ring an' a licence."

"Crabtree is perfectly right, father," says young Tom, lookin as iv he'd made his mind up at last. "I must marry Rachel. I know you can't believe a word I say, farmer, and think me a creature beneath contempt, but upon my soul I have had no

peace of mind for weeks over this business. I will do justice to her, father, by heaven!"

"Now, could anything be more provoking than this!" owd Cherrick grunted, dodgin abeaut in a fury. "Here's ten thousand pounds lying ready to your hand, and you won't condescend to pick it up."

"Aw s' begin to think yo're short o' brass in a bit, owd mon! What han yo comin in a year?"

"I'll marry Rachel, and nobody else," says Tom.

"Then I've done with you," his father snarled. "You can clear out of this, and never expect another penny from me."

"Very good, father. We can spare one another very well. I have little to thank you for, although I daresay in your own selfish way you have tried to do well for me. I am not a bad fellow at bottom if you hadn't spoiled me with your infernal vanity and conceit, and I hope to develop into a respectable man yet."

"Good lad, Tum!" th' farmer co'd eaut. "Tha'rt a betther chap nor aw thought thee, as heaw 'tis. When mun we goo for that licence?"

"I'm afraid we shall have no money for licences, Crabtree. The banns shall be published in the usual way."

"Aw'll find thee brass for a licence. What arta beaun to do for a livin?"

"God knows!"

"Happen thi fayther con find thee a job."

"His father will see him in the workhouse first," owd Cherrick said.

"Nay! aw con stop that gam, shuzheaw. Aw know ov a shop 'at 'll just suit thee, Tum; it's a thravellin job i' th' corn thrade, an' woth aboon a hundherd peaund a year. We'll see abeaut it to-morn, an' co for th' licence at t' same time. Wheere arta beaun to sleep to-neet?"

"At some alehouse or other, I suppose."

"Tha'd betther come an' live wi us at th' farm tuthri days. Aw'll be gooin neaw, an' expect thee up sometime toard neet. Wilta come?"

"I will."

"See tha does; an' iv this owd reskil ov a faythe thries to talk thee o'er just think on 'at when aw gate ov a job aw'll carry it through, an' iv tha slutthers off or plays ony scowbankin thricks aw'll be afther thee an' expose thee wherever tha happens to be. Aw con soon make this counthry too warm for thee; an' iv tha levs it aw'll follow thee to another, an howd thee up theere to th' scorn ov o dacent an' clen-minded folk; an' iv tha levs th' world—but nowe! aw'll follow thee no fur—beside, tha'd be takkin t' wrong turn for me."

Scowbankin, dishonest.

"I'll come, farmer."

"Well, we s' see," Jim says; an' as he'd sattl't his business he took his billycock an' went. Tom turn't up at neet, were made welcome bi th' Crabtree family, an' soon felt awom wi 'em. Just as they'rn gooin to bed he said quietly to Jim, "Farmer, you wanted Rachel yourself, I believe."

"Aw did."

"And still you are doing all you can to get me married to her. How is that?"

"It's noane eaut o' love for thee, Tummy; be sure o' that! Aw'll tell thee what aw'd do wi thee iv aw'd mi own road."

"What?"

"Snap thee across mi knee like a bit o' wood, an' beet a fire wi thee."

"Am I safe in this house?" axed Tom. "You haven't decoyed me into this lonely place to murder me, have you?"

"There's ne'er no tellin," Jim said. "Tha'd best scotch thi chamber dur an' sleep wi one e'e oppen."

Next day they went to th' teawn, geet t' thravellin job sattl't, an' bought a weddin licence.

"Away wi thee up th' clough wi that bit o papper, an' give it yon lass to keep," Jim said. "Tell her aw'll have yo wed o' Monday iv aw've to lurry yo bwoth bi th' neck."

"We shall be there without dragging, thanks to you. I can't thank you enough for helping to make me an honest man; but what motive you have is past my comprehension."

"Aw darsay it is, lad; an' so mich wur for thee. But tha didn't make thisel, aw reckon. Goo thi ways an' comfort yon lass."

Th' weddin coome off just as th' farmer had planned it. Jim seed it through, walked wi th' young couple into th' clough on their road wom, an' theere he stopped an' said,

"Aw'll lev yo neaw, childher, an' wish yo long an' happy."

"Don't be long before you call to see us, farmer," Tom said. "It does me good to be in the company of a man like you."

"Well, we s' see. Tha's takken a greight charge on thi shooldhers to-day; mind tha shaps to do o tha's promised, an' make thi wife as comfortable as hoo desarves to be."

"I'll do my best."

"God be wi thee, Rachel," th' farmer said, takkin her little hond in his. "Wherever aw goo, whatever aw do, aw con ne'er forget *thee*."

"Oh, Jim! aw've used thee ill!"

"Aw'm noane th' first chap 'at's bin made a foo on bi women, an' aw bear thee no grudge. Run away, childher, an' be happy; an' give a thought to me neaw an' again."

Awom, at home.

They left him, climbin up their steep road aboon th' brook, an' Jim stood lookin afther 'em, restin his big hond on a saplin.

"Tha'rt a bonny dingle," he said to hissel, "an' some weel aw love thee. Aw s' carry thee away wi me—this saup o' weet fo'in between th' green bonks, every reaunded an' hollowed stone undher it, mossy hillock an' ferny knowe, fleawery broo an' shady plantin—it's o i' mi yead! Grandher seets aw may happen find, but nowt like thee. Ever sin' a chilt aw've throdden these stony roads an' splashed i' th' brook; mony a breet day aw've wandhered here, an' neaw aw'm gooin aw s' lev mi heart behinnd. Theere's Rachel shakin her hanketcher on th' top. God bless thee, lass! God bless thee!

He dashed his neighve across his e'en, plunged deawn th' road wi greight sthrides, an' were sin upo' that clod no moore for ten year.

VI.

A good dyel con happen i' ten year, iv it sets that road. Tak ony ten year yo'n sin, an' yo'll be capped i' lookin back o'er it to find heaw mony folk han dhropped eaut o' th' world, heaw mony han come deawn an' gwone up i' th' scales, heaw places an' ideas are awther't. Look at yorsel, an' just think what yo were botherin yor yead abeaut an' sthrivin for ten year back. What yo took then to be th' best goods o' life—o yo pined an' teawed for—con jump up neaw for owt yo care; new things, never dhrem't on at that time, hang afore yor e'en neaw, to be cried for an' run afther tuthri year i' their turn, an' then to be followed bi moore, for there mun be summat to look forrad to iv we mun live. That's heaw it happens 'at fro th' year-owd babby, skrikin for his fayther's watch, to th' seventy-year bundle o' rheumatics, gropin on th' grave edge for another peaund or two to swell th' savins he con never spend, we're olez on th' grunt, unsatisfied, loisin seet o' what we han i' th' dark shadow o' what we want. We're a quare lot.

Ten year went past, then—plenty fast enough for th' happy, slow an' wearisome wi th' miserable—an' owd Cherrick—facthry owner, gentleman farmer, banker—sit in his big heause aboon Shayclough, lookin as iv life didn't agree wi him. His studyin were brokken bi a sarvant comin wi a two-inch-bi-one card on a twelve-inch thray. On th' card were printed

JAMES CRABTREE,

ESTATE AGENT.

"Show him in," says Cherrick, an' in he coome, big as a heause, sthrong as an elephant, sportin brodecloth, gowd watch-guard, an' silk hat. Cherrick beaunced up, shook honds wi him, an' axed him to sit deawn.

"I am delighted to see you, Mr. Crabtree, and particularly to see you looking so remarkably well."

"Aw'm moore welcome then nor aw were last time aw co'd. Done yo recollect that?"

"I do. Ah! my dear sir, things were very different then. You would hear of my son's death?"

"Aw've yerd an heaur sin' for th' first time. Dhreawn't at Hollinoth aw'm towd."

"Yes. He has been buried two years."

"Done yo know heaw his widow's gettin on?"

"She and her father still live in the old cottage, I believe."

"Han yo done owt for 'em?"

"No."

"Heaw's that?"

"My own affairs have been quite enough to occupy me, I can assure you."

"They olez occupied yo a dyel too mich, it's my belief. Heaw is it yo're advertisin this heause an' lond for sale?"

"I am completely ruined," Cherrick said, gettin restless in his cheer undher Jim's steady stare. "When all debts are paid I shall not have a penny to call my own."

"Well, that's a flogger! So yo'n bin scrattin afther brass o yor life, an' yo're beaut at th' finish."

"I am certainly left without now."

"What han yo done wi it o?" axed Jim. "Aw ne'er yerd on yo bein a fuddler, an' aw'll swear yo'n ne'er gien it i' charity. Heaw han yo shapped to get shut on it?"

"Speculations on the Stock Exchange."

"Ah! just so. Mich would ha moore. Noane satisfied wi rakin gowd in wi bwoth honds, fro bank an' facthry, yo mut aim at seaukin it in wi yor meauth too."

"Yes, I suppose so, if you like to put it that way. You seem to have fared better in the world than I have been able to do."

"It's nobbut reet aw should do, noather. Aw'm a chap 'at desarves to get on; con yo say as mich?"

"I should like to get on, at any rate, whether I deserve it or not. Where are you settled now, Mr. Crabtree?"

"Aw live i' Cheshire. Soon afther aw left wom aw happened to yer 'at Lord Darley wanted a yead mon for one ov his big estates theere; so aw went an' geet th' job."

"You were fortunate to do that without either influence or patronage."

"Aw'd no bother abeaut it," Jim said. "Aw co'd to see mi lord, an axed him for th' shop. He's a fawse-lookin customer, wi a square yead, an' clen-shaved o reaund bi th' neckhole. He looked hard at me, an' wanted to know what aw could do; so aw towd him, an' that were o reet.

'The chief qualification for this post is honesty,' he says. 'A really trustworthy and honourable man would be cheap at five hundred a year. Can you give me any references?'

'Yo mun write to th' parson at Yelley,' aw said. 'Aw've lived theere o mi life, an mi fayther an' hawve-a-dozen gronfaythers afore me. We'n ne'er bothered to scrat th' pedigree deawn; but aw darsay th' Crabtree stock's bin on that clod mony a hundherd year. Write to th' parson, an' ax him what he knows abeaut Jim ov Adam's.'

He wrote off first thing, an' said iv aw'd co again next mornin he'd go reaund to some o' th' farms wi me; so aw went, an' soon showed him aw knew summat abeaut mi job. Then he took me to th' estate office, an' poo'd his rent book eaut to thry iv he could freeten me wi long rows o' figures; but sums were ne'er no bother to me, yo known, an' aw rattl't 'em off whol he stared o reaund his yead.

'Are you accustomed to surveying?' he says next; an' aw towd him aw'd ne'er had mich practice, but could do it weel enough.

He took a plan off th' wole, an' says, 'Will you be good enough to measure these two enclosures this afternoon. I know the exact size of both, and can check your calculation to a yard.'

'To be sure,' aw said; 'aw'll measur owt for yo fro a barn-dur to a hay-moo. But aw s' ha to borrow a chen an' a lad to howd it.'

'You shall have both,' mi lord says; an' so when aw'd had mi dinner off aw set to th' meadows, an' fund he'd piked two abeaut as awkart as he could shap, for th' hedges were in an' eaut like a dog-leg. When aw took him th' size on 'em he compar't it wi a big book, an' towd me aw were wrong.

'One of them is substantially correct,' he says, 'but you are out of your reckoning in the other.'

'Iv yo'll onswer for th' chen bein reet aw'll ston to th' measurin,' aw said.

'You must be wrong.'

Aw axed him who'd measur't th' lond afore, an' he said it were some eminent architect i' th' village; so aw said,

'Will he be awom, done yo think? Let's tak him up, an' goo o'er it together.'

'That's an excellent idea,' mi lord says. 'We'll go at once.'

"We went, an' i' less nor hawve-an-heaur th' eminent architect fund it were him 'at were wrong; so afther that, yo known, th' job were as good as sattl't, an' when th' owd parson had written a good

word for me aw geet shopped sthraight off, an' aw've bin theere ever sin'. Aw've com'n o'er a-buyin this estate o' yors to-day. What done yo want for it?

"Are you coming to live here, then?"

"Oh nowe! It's noane for misel, yo undherstond; it's mi lord 'at wants it. He's moore lond neaw nor he could walk reaund in a month; so aw guess he thinks he met as weel have a bit moore to th' rook."

"We shall have no difficulty in arranging terms. Mr. Crabtree, I'm almost ashamed to ask after what you have seen of me, but if you could provide me with work of any kind I should be grateful to you all my life. There is nothing but the workhouse in prospect."

"Well, we s' want somebry here to keep things sthraight, yo known. Aw con happen shap that job for yo. It'll do yo good to start wortchin for yor livin, aw darsay."

"No doubt it will. I am rapidly altering my old view of things, I can assure you."

"Oh ah! yo'll larn wit in a while. There's nowt like a good cleaut on th' yead for wakkenin a chap up."

Afther a bit moore talk Jim left him an' turned toard th' clough. He looked to be thinkin hard abeaut summat; for he kept grinnin, waggin his yead an' lookin solemn again every tuthri yards, sthridin forrad an' noticin nowt abeaut him. He were soon on th' hill top, stonnin by th' owd cottage he knew so weel an' loved so mich; an' sthrong chap as he were he'd to poo up a minute to feight wi th' creawd o' thoughts ov owd times 'at flew reaund him like a swarm o' midges. He wiped his e'en in a bit, an' went on; but he were knocked o'er again as he geet near th' dur an' yerd th' owd fiddle chirpin away inside just as iv nowt were.

"God bless th' owd lad!" Jim thought. "Aw shouldn't wondher iv he's bin scrattin away at that bant ever sin aw were here afore, an' aw hope he'll live to rub a dyel o' rosin away yet. That'll be one o' th' tunes aw used to yer him play, iv aw nobbut knew. Heaw the hangment done folk make tunes, an' wheere done they get 'em fro? There's noane mich sowin wanted for that mak o' crops. He's at it yet; it's one o' thoose long uns, beaut oather end or side."

He knocked at th' dur, an' th' music stopped.

"That's wakken't him!" Jim said, an' he set th' dur oppen an' went sthraight in. A white faced young woman in a black frock geet up off a cheer an' coome toard him; he spread his arms, hoo walked reight into 'em beaut ony bother, an' their lips met.

"Rachel, lass!"

"Jim!"

"That's Jimmy!" Simon co'd eaut, jumpin up an' layin his fiddle carefully on th' table. "Wheere arta, lad?" an' he coome forrad wi his hond eaut.

"Here aw am, fayther," Jim said, layin howd on him. "Yo're lookin abeaut th' same, aw think; a shade greyer, iv owt."

"An' tha doesn't ail mich, bi th' feel an' seaund on thee," Simon quaver't, howdin Jim's big neighve wi bwoth honds. "Eh, my lad! aw love thee like a son; an' aw con never praise thee hard or long enough for o tha's done for me."

"Well, it's no use thryin iv yo cawn't shap it," Jim said, takkin th' owd chap back to his arm-cheer. "Hello!" he co'd eaut, "who's this? This is a fresh un!" an' he poo'd a little lass eaut o' th' nook, where hoo'd bin sittin on a buffet behinnd her gron-fayther's cheer. "Come here, little woman, an' let's have a look at thee. Well, theau *art* a pratty chilt; wi these bonny blue e'en, an' ringlets o' shinin gowd, an' cheeks ripe enough for brids to pike at. What's thi name, mi fairy?"

"Rachel, sir," th' little lass said, a bit shy on him.

"What, another on 'em!" Jim said, sittin deawn an' takkin th' chilt on his knee. "There'll be no stirrin for Rachels e'eneaw. Wilta come wi me, love, on th' railway, to a counthry o meadows an' gardens, an' let me be like a fayther to thee?"

Th' chilt laughed, an' looked at her mother.

"Oh! we'll tak thi mam too, iv hoo'll come, an' thi gron-fayther, an' Pincher an' o—heaw arta, owd dog? Tha looks a bit cratchinly—an' we'll o live together as happy as gipsies in a cart. What say'n yo, Simon?"

"Aw'm agreeable, Jimmy; but tha should have axed Rachel first."

"Aw know that," Jim said, "but aw'm ill freeten't o' doin it; for iv hoo cobs me away again it'll be domino."

He took Rachel's hond, an' hoo stood beside him as he sit wi th' chilt on his knee. Simon bent forrad fro th' ingle nook, an' owd Pincher waddl't to an' again between 'em, waggin his tail.

"My dear lass," Jim said, "it's idle to tell heaw aw love thee: tha knows. Tha choos't another chap afore me, an' wed him, an' there's nob'dy but me an' One beside ever knew heaw that clove into mi heart; but aw stood back an' ne'er bother't yo, an' shapped to ston it beaut wringin his neck. Tha'rt loase again neaw, an' aw've o mi owd love to offer thee, wi th' last ten years' savins put to it. Iv tha'll have me say so, an' let's ha done wi't."

"Aw s' be like to wed thee neaw, James, iv it's nobbut eaut o' gratitude," Rachel said, smilin at him through tears.

"Aw'll be noane wed eaut o' gratitude," Jim said; "an' aw wain't tak thee for charity, noather. Aw'll tak middlin good care yo ne'er wanten for nowt ony moore, for aw've a dyel moore brass nor aw know what to do wi; but iv tha's no love to gie me aw'll scrat on a single chap to th' end, an' be as satisfied as aw con."

Cratchinly, infirm with age.

'But aw have love waitin for thee, James, sich deep an' thrue love as aw ne'er felt for him 'at's dyead. Aw've long known what aw lost in loisin thee, an' aw'm nobbut too thankful to yer thi dear voice again, look into thi honest e'en, an tell thee heaw preaud aw am to have th' chance o' bein thi wife."

"Then it's o sattl't," laughed Jim, kissin her an' tossin little Rachel up. "Aw'll cart yo o off into Cheshire i' tuthri days; an' theere we s' find life breet an' yezzy, an' never ail nowt nor grumble again whol we con crawl."

"Plez God!" said Simon.

AS FAR AS ASHOTH.

AW'D written to th' poet to come o'er an' spend a week-end wi us, as aw'd a Sethurday off, an' could have a chance o' showin him reaund a bit; but he'd sent no onswer, an' we'd gien him up. But o' th' Friday neet, just as th' owd woman finished swillin th' flags, eaur Dick coome in wi th' empty bucket he'd bin usin to carry waythér for his mother an' said there were a sthranger comin up t' sthreet, lookin as iv he wanted to find somebry. Aw were pyerched at th' hobend readin politics, an' as near as a toucher fo'in asleep o'er their babby wark, but aw wakken't up a bit at that, thinkin it met just possibly be t' Mytholmroyd chap, an' axed Dick what he were like.

"He's a young fellah," th' lad said; "tall, an very stiff, wi a big moustache an' a nose like yon flat-iron hondle. He's whistlin, an' gapin o reaund him, an' swingin his umbrell; an' he wears a black jacket, grey breeches, an' a billycock."

"Bi th' mass, it's him!" aw said, beauncin up. "Does he gawp abeaut as iv his legs were i' one world an' his brains in another?"

"Summat that road," Dicky says. "A bit as iv he'd had a cleaut on t' yead wi a stick ten year sin', an' were thinkin abeaut it yet."

"Oh, it's him!" aw said, makin for th' dur. "That's t' gradely look o' poets an' Prestwichites—olez seechin an' never findin." Sure enough, theere he were when aw geet eautside; an' aw welcom't him, poo'd him inside, slapped him into a cheer, an' made him feel awom i' less nor two minutes.

"Here he is, owd dame," aw said, as mi t'other hawve coome clankin on her pattens. "We'n getten him at last, an' we'll howd him fast for a bit neaw."

John smil't an' shook honds wi th' owd woman; hoo looked hard at him, sayin nowt, an' then slipped her pattens off an' crept into t' other reawm wi her appron to her e'en. Aw could see what were to do, so aw followed her in a minute.

"What is it, lass?"

"Eh, faythér! Did onybody ever see sich a likeness? He's t' very picthér o' what eaur Joe would ha bin, iv he'd lived." Hoo dhropped her yead on mi shooldhér, an sobbed.

"Bless thi owd e'en an' thi lovin heart!" aw said. "They're no moore alike nor Adam an' Moses; but tha con see thi lad everywheere, and will do whol tha lives, aw expect. God made

women so; an' whol there's one on yo left wick love con never fade eaut o' th' world."

"Whatever is the matter?" axed John, poppin his yead through t' kitchen dur; an' when aw towd him he took mi wife's hond an' kissed it, like Raleigh wi Queen Lizabeth, an' went back to his cheer beaut sayin a word.

We looked at one another when aw went back, but there were nowt said, an' i' tuthri minutes th' owd dame were knockin abeaut as cheerful as ever.

"And this is our Dick, is it?" says John, pattin th' lad's curly yead. "Your other children are not at home, then?"

"Nowe; it's one o' their science class neets, an' Tom's larnin fancy thrades o' welly o maks—chemisthry, an' asthronomy, an' geology, an' sich like—so he's middlin busy. Polly's somewheere abeaut. Tha'll be stoppin o'er Sunday wi us?"

"No, I can't do that. I am an organist, and must be at home in time for Sunday morning service. That's my reason for coming to-night; so that we can put in a full day to-morrow."

"Tha's done reet," aw said, "but it's a pity tha cawn't stop it eaut. Orginist, arta? Tha'rt like rootin afther o t' fine arts at once. Couldn't thi blower shap to turn t' thing for an odd day? But it's happen one o' th' far-larnt orgins, where th' player sits on a plank, scrawms up an' deawn a length o' keighs wi his fingers, an' potes abeaut in a dark hole wi his feet?"

"Yes; one of that sort," John said, laughin.

"Well, t' simplest job 'd be to get a hondle to it, aw sh' think; but aw darsay tha knows moore abeaut sich things nor me. Aw con fot most music eaut ov a loom ov owt. Ha'ever, we mun do t' best we con; an' iv there's nobbut one day we'll have a good un—that is, iv th' owd damsel here 'll let us eaut."

"Onybody met believe aw used thee ill bi t' road tha talks an' co's me," mi wife said.

"Mi fayther co's everybody," Dick says; "but he's nobbut laughin at 'em o th' time."

"Ha, ha!" says John. "That's one to the youngster."

"Thee keep quiet, Dick," aw said. "It's a rum un iv mi own childher are turnin reaund on me this road. Aw'll tell t' schoomaisther o' thee."

Dick were noane mich freeten't. He nobbut wagged his big yead, shook his fat sides, screwed his blue e'en up an' rowl't abeaut on his buffet. Then Polly coome in, so aw co'd on her to come an' ston up for her owd fayther; but hoo were a bit shy o' th' poet, an' afther shakin honds an' havin a word or two wi him hoo crept quietly to her stoo i' th' nook beside my cheer, where th' little quiet meause sits for heaurs.

"This is eaur little pet, John," aw said, smoothin her breet yure back. "We liken th' lads weel enough, tha knows; but this

little helpless dot taks moore lookin afther nor they done, an' t moore bother folk han wi their childher t' moore they loven 'em."

"We'n very little bother wi eaurs, bless 'em!" mi wife said. "There's plenty wur; isn't there, Dick?"

"Aw dun'know, mother," says Dick. "Yo'n a dyel o' saucin to do sometimes. Yo grumbl't last neet when aw were singin

'Alley, alley, asther,
Come deawn fasther,'

whol it were rainin; an' aw've bin catchin it again neaw for slattin wayther eaut o' th' bucket. There's olez summat wrong."

"There will be as long as tha lives, mi lad," aw towd him, for aw never reckon to miss a chance o' moralisin a bit; it's a chep amusement, an' makes yo feel so mich betther nor other folk. "Tha'll have a dyel wur grumblers nor thi mother at thee e'eneaw —an' they wain't be hawve as mich consarn't abeaut doin thee good. But iv tha con larn to carry thi buckets sthraight whol tha'rt young tha wain't be likely to wort 'em when tha'rt groon up, an' that'll be one good thing."

Dick took as mich notice o' th' sarmon as he uses doin, an' that' as near noane at o as yo could very weel get; him an' Polly were on t' brode grin at one another afore aw'd done, an' when their mother thried to look savage at 'em for their bad manners they laughed wur nor ever, so we o laughed together at th' finish, an' geet eaut on 't that road. In a bit Tom londed in wi a pile o' books undher his arm, an' his quiet thoughtful face wakken't up when he seed t' visithor, an' fund eaut who he were.

"I am greatly pleased to see you here, sir," Tom says, givin Istram his hond in his sthraightforrad fashion. "We often talk of you, and I have been anxious to see you for some time."

Aw watched John as he took stock o' my lad's square yead an' deep e'en, an' felt fain to see him smile an' look plez't; for aw'm deawn o' these poets—they're pychin, watchful fellahs, an' con reckon a chap up in a snift.

"Come! you are not all afflicted with the dialect," John said.

"We can all talk English at a pinch, you know," Tom towd him. "I use the dialect myself as often as not; but on these class nights I catch the twang of the schools, and can't get rid of it all in a minute."

"And what particular science are you engaged upon now?"

"They takken 'em in a rook," aw said, "one deawn an' t' other come on; an' some o' t' lads getten their yeads so macadamised wi brokken flints o' larnin 'at their wits are buried, an' they con hardly tell rule o' three fro Latin grammar, nor separate Oliver Cromwell fro owd Canute. They'n ologies stickin eaut o reaund 'em, like spears in a missionary; but whether conchology myens

Wort, to fall sidewards.

yead-measurin, or philology is th' science o' chetin other folk eaut o' their brass, very few on 'em knows. Aw were talkin to one on 'em t'other neet—Cherrick's little lad, tha knows, Tom—but aw could do no good wi him He's as full o' miles as a Sunday schoo savins bank is ov hawpnies. Th' sun were ninety-one million mile off, he said. 'Is it for sure?' aw says. 'It'd tak a rare length o' popbant to send a kite theereto. An' heaw fur is it reaund t' middle o' th' world, Jimmy?' 'Aw just forget, neaw, but it's a dyel o' theausands,' he says. 'It'd like tak a dyel o' clippin up, tha thinks?' 'It would that!' 'An' what's th' difference between what yo co'n a square mile an' one wi a gradely end to it?' aw axed him. He studied a good bit o'er that, an' then said he thought a square mile were one yo could olez walk reaund; so aw dursen't ax him ony moore puzzles, freeten't ov his brains gooin."

"You must always discount my father's satire, you know, sir," Tom said.

"Yes, I know," says John.

"Co me!" aw said. "An undher mi own slates!"

Tom went on: "At any rate, father, your remarks don't apply to me at present, for I am only considering one subject—astronomy. I should think, Mr. Istram, you must be greatly interested in that science."

"Yes, I am."

"There is scope for you imaginative gentlemen in the upper spaces," Tom said. "I am often tempted to apply the light of fancy to the problems set us. The asteroids, for instance, which we have been hearing some statements about to-night—what do you think of them?"

"Do you mean in the way of accounting for them?"

"Yes."

"You must ask me an easier one, Tom," th' poet said, laughin hard; "the old-fashioned theory was that there had been a collision and a smash, but probably you modern enquirers would disdain such an explanation as that."

"I don't know," Tom says, thinkin abeaut it. "There is no better explanation yet, perhaps. It would be rough for the inhabitants of the colliding planets. I wonder what became of them."

"They're very likely thoose little hairy black chaps 'at Stanley let on last year," aw said. "Thoose folk mun ha' dhropped fro somewheere moore nor gradely. Tom's wortchin thee reaund very cliverly, poet, wi his imaginative talk; what he wants to know is iv tha's brought ony rhymes i' thi pocket."

"Yes, I have," John said, an' he never blushed. "You might be sure I shouldn't venture to visit a critic of your weight without preparing myself. I have some verses here that slightly touch upon the planets; so perhaps Tom may be interested in them."

"That's reet, lad," aw said; "blaze away, an' we'll ston it as weel as we con."

Tom said "Thank you," t'other young uns looked solemn, an' mi wife started noddin wi sleepiness, as hoo olez does when there's poethry stirrin, iv it's nobbut a hat or swop advertisement; an' we o looked as fawse as we could whol th' poet poo'd his pappers eaut, shapped hissel, an' read his rhymes.

LABOUR.

Immortal labour! boon and bane of man,
To thee I raise a wistful strain of song;
Labour, that here with earlicst life began,
That shall not fail while earth yet whirls along
Its unsupported path, amid a throng
Of hanging worlds—not without labour made;
Even their Creator, the all-wise, all-strong,
May well some god-like dues to toil have paid
When on the yielding air those ponderous globes he laid.

Given that Creator's wish to frame a world,
Peopled with living creatures such as we,
Through unknown spaces blind and helpless whirled,
Striving for ever against destiny,
And labour's uses we may clearly see
To guide our feet along the slippery shelves
Of this velocid sphere; where what shall be
Is lost in rayless night, and no man delves
From the past's gloomy hill sure knowledge of ourselves.

First came the healthful tillage of the field
And fruit-hung garden, care of grazing flocks,
Tending of fowl and herd on hill and weald,
And freedom wide for all. Men clove no blocks
Of stone to shield their bodies from the shocks
Of rain or wind, but under sun and sky
Unshrouded lived upon the tree-clad rocks,
And grassy slopes, or found a lodging by
Slow brooks that ran with ever-murmuring melody.

Then grew the host of handicrafts, as man
Progressed in knowledge; iron and wood were wrought
To shapes of use and beauty; rivers ran
No longer spending idle strength for nought,
But into willing servitude were brought;
The noble horse was maimed and crushed to fit
A drudge's place, and plodding labour taught;
Huge walls and roofs were piled with measured wit,
And earth was deeply gashed by many a yawning pit.

Poised on the full-heaped sea, the sailor made
His wind-shaped course through days of storm and sun;
The warriors massed their ranks in grim parade,
Staking red life on duty to be done;
The wide-browed thinker from the tangle spun
By myriad minds drew threads of shining gold;
The healer strove with Death, and often won
Spoil from the forays of that bandit old;
The prophet led his flocks toward the heavenly fold.

We, their inheritors, must follow still
The path God's compasses and plummet set;
Not only labouring to climb life's hill,
But under heavy burdens doomed to fret;
Though knavish cowards may escape the sweat
Of toil by weighing down their brother-slaves
With doubled loads, all-careless if the debt
Crush men and women helpless to their graves,
They yet shall surely fill the task stern Justice craves.

Thus, on the whirling wheel of Labour pressed
By the stern lapidary Time, we're carved
And burnished, till the veins of ore that rest
Within us show their tracings, and the scarved,
Earth-sullied crust that wraps us in is swarved
And rent away: bereft of that dull screen,
With inward lustre shining, we, safe-wharved
On the strewn shores of heaven, may yet be seen
Fit gems to sparkle with an everlasting sheen.

"Come! tha's getten a good height up, this time," aw towd him when he'd done. "There's moore cleauds nor dirt abeaut that lot. Hast ony moore, lad?"

"Yes. Here is a tragedy in blank verse, about three thousand lines in length. Shall I read it?"

Aw oppen't th' oon dur an' said, "Just cob it in here, sithee, an' aw'll beet th' fire wi it to-morn. It's noane woth cartin abeaut. There's nobry time neawadays to wade through plays that width; we gwone bi styem-peawer, think on."

"O tempora! O mores!" says John, grinnin. "Well here is a shorter one—a hashed-up collection of wise saws; old, but imperishable."

TRUISMS.

List, untried youth, to sober counsel, blending
Old stores of gathered wit;
Before thy feet, through life's dark pathways wending,
To shine as lamp well lit.

Life is an easy task for him who, knowing
The end for which he strains,
With steady net sweeps Time's wide river, flowing
Full-heaped with hidden gains.

Harder for those who yield to passion's leading,
With throes of discontent;
In wavering aims, no line of duty heeding,
Their fitful powers are spent.

Hardest of all to those who, idly sitting
By the swift water's flume,
Careless of tide or treasure by them flitting,
Lounge useless to the tomb.

Yet waste not all thy happy youth in toiling,
The world is broad and fair;
Turn oft aside to watch sweet Nature coiling
Her green, wind-ruffled hair.

Pass from the cark and pain that ever follow
Where many feet have trod;
Alone, on breeze-swept hill, in brook-worn hollow,
Stand face to face with God.

Crush not the blooms of love, in beauty springing,
Gardened within thy heart;
Seek out one worthy through the years, light-winging,
With thee to bear her part.

Dream not that earth was fashioned for *thy* treading;
Stretch forth a loving hand
To wipe the tears afflicted ones are shedding
Through all this smiling land.

So peace, within thy spirit gently dwelling,
Shall fend all shocks of pain;
And voices round thy grave will linger, telling
Thou hast not lived in vain.

Yet hope not for dull ease or sluggish pleasure
When labour shall be past;
Take joy and sorrow in allotted measure,
And strive on to the last.

Loiter not in the world's alluring spaces,
By pleasant fount or lawn,
But struggle up the hill's steep, shadowy places
To meet the breaking dawn.

Tread steadily thy pathway, ne'er resigning
The task till life is done;
For ere upon thine eyes the light comes shining
The summit must be won.

Aw patted him on th' back an' said, "Tha mends every time tha gwoes on, lad. Aws' ha to gate co'in thee a poet i' yearnest in a bit, aw do believe. There's some good advice for thee theere, Tom, iv tha'll nobbut heed it. Just reighch deawn thoose bits o' waste papper off th' pot shelf, an aw'll read yo two bits o' rhymes o' mi own. They'll seaund rough afther o these fine verses, but aw cawn't help it. Wakken up, lass; this is some o' my weighvin."

FORTY YEAR.

It's forty year, mi good owd dame,
Sin' aw geet wed to thee,
But i' my e'en tha looks just t' same
An will whol they con see.

Eaur childher say'n we're turnin grey,
An' very like they're reet;
But tha'rt t' same bonny lass to-day
Aw loved when young an' breet.

Fro cwortin times to these we'n let
O' mony a happy heaur,
An' happen we s' ha tuthri yet
Afore we han to ceawer.

Eaur throubl't days are eaut o' seet,
Though bitther pain we'n felt;
Owd smiles an' tears i' memory's leet
To tendher feelins melt.

It's twenty year sin' Billy deed,
When he were four year owd;
Don't cry owd dame—tha's little need—
He's safe i' th' heavenly fowd.

Aw know tha's hud his little shoon,
An' th' belt he used to wear,
His Noah's ark, an' th' silver spoon
Just bought for him at th' fair.

Aw know tha sees him morn an' neet,
In his owd nook o' th' bed,
Looks in his e'en so laughin breet,
An' smoothes his curly yead.

An' iv tha lives a hundherd year
Aw know tha'll olez fret;
But ne'er heed, lass! he'll goo no fur,
We s' catch up to him yet.

We'n reawm for joy i' sorrow's cup,
Surelee, whol we con look
At t' other childher o groon up—
We'n had a bonny rook!

They're rare good lads an' lasses too,
Aw'm preaud to co 'em mine;
O sthrong an' honsome, fawse an' thrue—
Wheere's sich another nine?

Tha knows heaw they o wortched an' shapped
When aw were deawn wi th' chills;
They kept us o i' meight and wapped
Abeaut like scopperils.

They poo'd their bits o' savins eaut,
An' laid 'em deawn on th' bed,
An' little Joe coome wi a cleaut
O' greensauce on his yead.

Aw'm gettin fast wi t' gronchildher,
Aw cawn't tell which is which;
For they com'n swarmin in at th' dur
Like midges in a twitch.

An' iv they o gwone on t' same beaut
When we're laid by asleep,
They'n ha' to ratch th' owd island eaut,
Or pile 'em up two deep.

We cawn't expect so long to stop
Fro undher t' coffin lid;
It's set up neaw, an' beaun to dhrop
Like a breek-thrap on a brid.

Hud, hidden. *Scopperils*, whirligigs. *Greensauce*, sorrel. *Twitch*, a narrow way.

We'n played a tidy gam at life;
Eaur love has lasted through;
There never were a betther wife,
An' tha's made me good, too.

So when they lay'n us deep i' th' greaund
We'll sattle undher t' sod,
Wi mony a scented fleawer set reaund,
Bi t' childher's feet oft throd.

We'll seech eaur little Billy, then,
An' hond-i'-hond we'll wait
Bi th' shinin river, ready, when
O t' childher com'n to th' gate.

An' one bi one we'll help 'em up
That everlastin broo,
O' th' ever-runnin spring to sup,
An' gate a life 'at's new.

An' t' gronchildher i' turns 'll come,
When fro this world they're riven;
There'll be tight squeezin here for some,
But reawm for o i' heaven.

"That's supposed to be an owd friend o' mine, at t' other end o' th' Row, talkin to his wife; an' aw've another here abeaut him an' his lass. They'll be as plez't as Punch to find theirsel i' print."

MI DAUGHTHER.

God bless thi pratty face, mi chilt!
It's twenty year sin' first tha smil't
I' th' dellit, an mi heart beguil't
Wi thoose breet e'en;
An' mony a pleasant heaur we'n whil't
Through frost an' green.

An' con ta find it i' thi heart
Fro thi owd dad an' mam to part?
Nay, lass! aw want no tear to start
Deawn that ripe cheek;
But when tha'rt gwone we s' feel a smart
Aboon a week.

Tha'd like to stop, tha says, an' yet
Tha's promis'd Joe, an thinks he'd fret
Iv he cawn't have thee neaw, to pet
An' co his own;
Well! tha'll be like to wed him, Bet,
An' lev th' harstone.

He'll never love thee like thi dad;
But he's a limber, weel-set lad;
Aw connot say thi choice is bad,
Or think tha'll rue;
An' yet aw cawn't help feelin sad
'At tha mun goo.

Aw reckon love bi nathur groos,
An beaut it folk are nobbut foos;
Iv aw misel owd times met choose
Again to spend,
Aw'd have a tuthri cwortin do's,
An' wed at th' end.

For twenty year we'n watched thee thrive,
An' fund thee mony a butther't shive;
But though we'n had to scrat an' rive
Bwoth neet an morn,
Thank God! we'n ne'er bin clemm'd i' th' hive
Sin' tha were born.

Chilt! aw con see thee toddlin reaund
At five year owd, an' yer th' sharp seaund
O' th' little clogs on t' stony greaund,
As eaut tha'd run
To meet me when aw're womward beaund,
Mi day's wark done.

Tha'll oft ha sin thi mother crill
Wi thoughts o' th' time when tha were ill
Wi th' fayver, an' could ne'er lie still
Bi neet or day,
But looked as iv tha're larnin skill
To fly away.

What a heart-breighkin time that were!
Aw hardly durst goo eaut o' th' dur,
For tha kept gettin wur an wur,
An fadin fast;
We knew iv tha went ony fur
Tha'd come to th' last.

Thi mother sit wi thee o neet,
An' aw coome deawn i' th' mornin breet;
Tha looked as white as th' coverin sheet,
Thi limbs felt cowd;
Aw skriked, an' turn't away fro th' leet,
Aw couldn't howd!

Thi mother on mi shooldher bent,
Aw kissed her quiverin lips, an' sent
A mutther't word to heaven, an' went
To do mi wark,
Sure aw should find when th' day were spent
Tha're lyin stark.

A bitther day that were, an' long!
Mi mates could see the're summat wrong,
An' hushed their whistlin, chat, an' song;
"What's up?" they said;
Aw towd 'em, sobbin wild an' sthrong,
"My lass is dyead."

Crill, curdle (*i.e.*, to grow cold with fear).

But when aw turn't toard wom at neet,
An' th' kitchen window coome i' seet,
T' blint werenot dhrawn !—wi hope made leet
Mi heart jumped up,
An' onto th' flags rowlt dhrops o' weet
Fro mi full cup.

Tha lived, but reaund thi kayther stood
Thi cryin mother, th' neighbours good,
An' t' docthor—he'd done o he could
Thi life to save ;
But said, "Aw deaubt this pratty bud
Mun bloom i' th' grave."

"Docthor, it connot be !" aw said,
"Aw've com'n wom thinkin hoo were dyead,
But neaw aw see mi prayers han sped,
An' God mun know
'At iv He crops that tiny yead
He'll kill us o !"

Tha lived, mi lass, an neaw tha'rt here ;
Aw see thi bonny e'en shine clear,
Thi silver voice seaunds i' mi ear,
An' fills mi heart ;
An' neaw fro th' chilt long loved so dear
Aw s' ha to part.

Ah ! tha'll be like to goo ; but come
Sometimes to see th' owd folk awom ;
They reckon Joe's weel off, an' some
Are spoilt wi brass ;
But dunnot thee set up thi comm,
Mi bonny lass !

It's what aw ne'er could undherstond,
'At folk wi heauses, brass, or lond,
Con sit wi lifted e'en an' hond
On t' top o' th' wo,
Forgettin there's a common bond
'At joins us o.

Think on we're o alike i' th' skin,
Whether we're donned i' silk or lin,
Whether i' hut or ho it's bin
Eaur luck to live ;
Brass noather sense nor thruth con win,
Nor comfort give.

Tha'll find 'at happiness 'll shed
It scented blossoms on thi yead,
Iv tha'll just notice what aw've said ;
An' 'at yo'll be
As reet as robins whol yo're dyead,
Thy chap an' thee.

Kayther, cradle. *Comm*, comb. *Ho*, hall.

"Eh, maisther! do give o'er o' yor recitin an let's get some supper," mi wife said, but aw seed th' owd beauty rubbin her e'en. "Come, childher; be shappin for bed. Surelee yo'n o had poethry enough for once!"

"We s' do for a bit neaw, aw think. Bring eaut thi cowd beef an' t' other oddments. Come, John; poo up an' let's get eautside summat, an' then when t' childher's gwone to bed we'll have a crack an' a smooke; an' iv it keeps fine to-morn we'll thry to get as far as Ashoth."

Poets i' general are noane very good getthers up, aw believe. John didn't foot up to his breakfast whol nine o' t' clock, so aw'd a good chance o' gettin mi newspappers read an' takkin a walk reaund. T' weather shapped, an' we started off abeaut ten expectin to make a good day on it, crossed th' teawn an' geet into Bury Road, away fro th' bustle an' smooke.

"This is one o' th' owdest bits o' Rachda, John," aw said, pooin up aboon Cherrick's facthry; "one o' th' first nooks th' owd barfoot settlers chopped eaut o' th' forest 'at used to cover o these hills. We're stonnin upo mony a buried saycret, an' walkin o'er mony a sthrong chap's bwons. That's Coptrod on th' hilltop, sithee, an' th' Redbrook runs just undher it. They were bwoth here, an' co'd bi th' same names, long afore Conquerin Billy licked us at Hastins. A pratty seet this broo mut be at that time, thick wi timber, sweepin deawn to th' river 'at ran a bit fur back then nor it does neaw, matched bi th' castle hill yon across th' hollow; o th' starved, soot-smoor't greaund fresh, smilin, weel-fed, an' donned in a bran-new suit o' green every spring."

"But that last phenomenon occurs yet, doesn't it?"

"Nay! it's folk 'at's green neaw; we con groo nowt but what's pawm-peckl't. That's another owd heause, sithee—Oakenrod Ho. It's let off i' cottages neaw, an' th' owd biggin's bin petched up an awther't whol it's like Puddin Joe's knife—first he geet a new blade, an' then a fresh haft, but it were th' same knife for o that. Three hundherd year sin' a Gabriel Gartside lived i' that heause, an' shapped to make hissel middlin comfortable aw should think. He were foolish enough to get wed to young Alice Hamer fro th' Pinfowd; but there's happen some scuse for him, becose lasses i' thoose days, wi th' sweet air an' sunshine, 'd have sich breet e'en an' skins o' satin 'at o th' chaps 'd goo off their yeads wi lookin at 'em."

"That's common enough yet. There will be bright eyes and smooth cheeks after our time."

"Ah! an' cakebrade an' ale too. But thee be quiet, lad, an' hearken; aw con hardly get a word in edgeways for thee. Well, as aw were sayin, they geet wed, an' lived together mony a year bi

Biggin, building.

th' river edge, an' iv they weren't happy they met ha bin. Alice 'd have her honds full wi a greight heause like that to swill an' clen, childher to rear, an' sarvants to watch; an' Gabriel 'd fill his time up as weel as he could beaut wortchin, helped through bi a bull-bait or cock-feight neaw an' again, or happen spendin an heaur an' a shillin at th' 'Blue Bell,' or Amen Corner. Ailse 'd sauce him weel, too, iv he stopped eaut too lat, an he'd have some mak ov a lie ready; they were up to o thoose little dodges i' th' good owd times. He poted abeaut a good while, an' then he deed, levin a good bit o brass, four childher, a grey cowt, an' seven silver spoons."

John laughed. "You reckon up the poor man's effects like an auctioneer. But how have you come by all this curious information?"

"Aw didn't find it i' th' loom box, tha may be sure. We'n a chap i' th' teawn 'at's olez scrattin among owd lumber—a sort ov hee-class rag an' bwon picker—an aw've getten it eaut ov a book he's printed. Give him a cracked owd gravestone, a church book full o' dyeaths an' kessenins, or a bundle o' scrawl't papper cover't wi dust an' eddycrop neests, an' he's abeaut reet."

"He is an antiquary, evidently."

"Summat o' that mak. There were another Gartside, co'd Sam, a hundherd year afther Gabriel sign't his spoons away; a very greight chap he were, stewart to one o' th' Byrons, an' howdin a dyel o' lond. Poor Sam! He cworted a lass fro Yorkshire, an' crossed Blacksnedge aboon once to see her, aw'll be beaund; an' he'd find cwortin hard wark, too, wi th' slutchy roads they kept then, an' no penny post. They geet o sattl't for th' weddin to come off at York, an' Sam rode o'er th' hill once again to fot his wife. That were his last journey, mi lad. He deed just two heaurs afore th' weddin time."

"Good heavens!"

"Two heaurs! Wife ready donned, parson waitin, t' minsther full o' folk watchin for th' fashionables, meight ready cooked, bellringers just beaun to poo their ropes, an' wap went Sam! O th' sad tale's towd i' three lines ov a book; his name makes another line in a printed list; an' that's o we han left o' th' rich an peawerful stewart o' th' manor."

"You mentioned the Byrons. I suppose they were lords here for a long while?"

"Welly four hundherd year, an' they were knockin abeaut i' Buttheroth afore that. Some on 'em could feight a bit, but they geet deawn to poethry at last, an' that soon sattl't 'em."

"Come along, cynic," says John; an' we knocked forrad up th' road.

Eddycrop, spider.

T' threes an' hedges, 'at's bin lookin so grand this summer, were fast loisin their complexions, an' kestin their owd clooas; th' meadows looked bare an' breawn; a mournful tinge lee on everything reaund us; makin us quiet an' sparin o' talk. We turned into th' cemetary for tuthri minutes, had a peep at Joe's grave, an' a look reaund at th' marble shafts an' slabs shinin i' th' mornin sunleet; an' aw gated maundherin again, as it's mi road to do when there's time an' reawm, an' somebry younger nor misel to hearken.

"They're o here, lad. Rude forefaythers o' this owd hamlet, polished chips off thoose taugh blocks, genthry, parsons, aldhermen, an' o sorts up to weighvers; o fast asleep, an' past bein bother't wi oather tailors or clogmakers again. Like as their stones are, so they were; some stonnin hee an' breet, decked wi fine faldherdals; some hutchin nar th' greaund, lettin theirsel be throdden on; some cut square, solid, an' plain; some carved into shapes, feaw or pratty, as good or bad taste sattl't it; some on th' hill top, an' some deawn i' th' hole; an' neaw cowd an' senseless as these stones they're lyin, flat o' their backs, just as they were left afther t' last reaund wi that champion wrostler, dyeath."

"Let us thrash out the simile, while we are about it," John said. "Even as these rock-reft and quarried blocks are scattered here, with no regularity of form or symmetry of line—each planted without regard to its position as affecting, or in relation to, that of others—so stood the animate lumps of clay now lying beneath masonry and mould; self-wrapt, isolated, converging to no centre, conforming with no plan, selfish-straining, cruel-hearted——"

He broke deawn, oather for words or wynt, or bwoth. "Goo on!" aw said; "tha'll make 'em eaut to be a quare breed o' stones in a bit, wi thi similes. Aw ne'er yerd o' selfish marble afore.

"True; but you will admit that many of the clay-lumps were selfish enough and to spare. I say to you, weaver, that the poor cried unto them for bread——"

"An' they gav 'em a stone!"

"Their bodies rest now on this quiet slope. Hunger and thirst are over, to throuble them no more. Side by side ruler and victim lie on a level at last, the artificial barriers of civilisation undermined by graves; and if justice cannot thrive in this world it may flourish in the far land where wealth is valueless, food unnecessary, and life past the losing."

"We s' happen see, some day," aw said; an' we wandher't forrad beaut havin disturbed ony dyead folk so far as we could tell.

Just past t' "Dog an' Parthridge" we coome on a young sithers grindher pyerched on his machine an' threddlin away wur nor a hondloom weighver. He looked to have a bit o' gam abeaut him bi th' sly twinkle in his e'en an' th' road his hat were cocked; he

were whistlin like a canary an' squeezin sheawers o' fireworks eaut ov his whuzzin stone. We poo'd up to hearken his tune, an' when he'd done aw gav him a clap, an' John said "Very good!" He looked deawn at us fro his winthredge, nodded an' laughed, an' then laid to again, an' we sit deawn undher th' hedge to watch th' performance. When he'd sent enoo sparks flyin he turned t' knife blade onto his polishin stone, an' in a crack th' bit o' steel were shinin like a lookin-glass; he howded it up then for us to look at, an' aw gav him another clap.

"Theere yo are," he says. "Silver-plated o reaund bi a new patent, an' warranted to cut owt deawn to cocoa-nut yure. Sithers to gri—ind!"

He finished up wi sich a yeawl 'at my teeth ricked, an' th' poet cover't his ears an' co'd eaut, "For God's sake don't do that again!"

"Do what! That's nobbut shop talk. It's no use hangin a sign up on my emporium——"

"That's a good word, lad," aw put in.

"——an' it 'd be brass thrut away advertisin i' t' papper wi a shop upo wheels, so we're like to do as weel as we con, same as Jimmy Lumb said when he popped his grondmother's specs to tak him to Belle Vue."

"You will rather frighten people than attract them by that blood-curdling noise," John said. "It's like—let's see—oh, be hanged!—what's it like, weaver? I'm fast for a simile."

"Tha's no need to be fast long; tha con yer th' same din ony time at a pig-killin. Who were thi singin-maisther, owd brid?"

"Aw'm noane just otogether what yo met co a thrained singer," t' grindher said. "Aw'd to pike mine up eaut o' th' hedge-bottoms, an' ahm afther t' sparrows."

"Aw ne'er yerd sparrows thry that mak ov a din. Tha's noane bin o'er i' Italy studyin then?"

"Aw've to study hard enough to keep sthraight at Smobridge, say naught abeaut Italy; beside, they durn't wesh their feet oft enough i' that counthry. Aw'll keep this side o' th' moor a bit yet."

"An so tha gwoes rootin reaund grindin sithers for a livin?"

"Ah! we con grind owt fro a penknife to a porritch-slice. But that's nobbut i' fine weather, yo known. Aw'm a umbrell chap when it's weet. That's nobbut a shabby mak o' one yor mate's getten. Let me cover it for yo, maisther—a fashionable lookin chap like yo should hav a good umbrell. Dagmar, five bob; silk, seven an' a tanner."

"It's good enough for me, thank you," says John, laughin.

"Dunnot be freeten't aw'm beaun to steighl it. Checks gien wi every ordher, but no divi on 'em," an' he poo'd a hondful o' brass tokens eaut ov his pocket. "Name an' addhress on this card, see yo. We're noane o' yor scowbankin wasthrels 'at nobry

con howd; we'n a stake i' t' counthry, an' con olez be fund awom fryin it." He hopped off his pyerch, an' gav us a card wi this on:—

THOMAS SCOWCROFT,
Grinder, Glazer, and Cutlery Manipulator,
425, Dearnley Road,
Smallbridge.

Umbrellas Made, Re-covered, and Repaired,
giving satisfaction to all.

Dealer in Fancy Foreign and English Birds.
N.B.—Fresh Hen Eggs laid every day.

Hair Cut Plain or Ornamental. Leeches Kept.
Concertina-player for Stirs.
Yours truly, T. SCOWCROFT.

"Tha's like jobs enoo agate," aw said. "Tha should get fat eaut o' this lot. Hasta ne'er thought o' startin a thripe shop?"

"Nowe," he said, "but aw'm beaun to get wed afore long, iv aw con spare hawve a day, an' set up a chipped pottato saloon. That's t' job for makin brass!"

"Well, I hope you'll succeed," says John, wi that quiet smile on his face aw like so weel to see. "But what do you mean by ornamental hair-cutting?"

"It lies mostly at t' back o' th' neck," Scowcroft said, sittin deawn on his machine again an' crossin his legs. "We con give yo oather a sthraight-edge or a hawve moon, an' finish th' ends off square or scolloped, just as yo fancy; an' yo con have a loase hangin crop or be shived off close an' snod, as iv a smoothin-iron had bin o'er it. Then there's a bit ov a knack i' sidin th' bristly stubs off, an' makin a clen job o' th' neck-hole, an' o that. Th' shape o' yor yead o depends on th' road yo're powed. We con make a bowstheryead as fur reaund th' scawp as ever Bill Shakspere were, or turn ony mathematical fellah into a ninnyhommer. Th' fawsest on us gaten a-lookin a bit soft when t' yure's off."

"It's a quare thing to me," aw said, "'at goo wheere aw will, an' talk to who aw may, aw'm never long beaut gettin Shakspere cobbed i' mi teeth; but it is a capper to yer on him fro a sithers-grindher, 'at dyels i' bantam cocks an' breeds leeches, to say nowt abeaut fancy powin at twopence a clip. Let th' owd chap rest in his crack; tha could ne'er ha fitted *his* yead onto a barber's block."

"Aw'd ha' thried hard iv aw'd ever getten th' chance. He said hissel 'at there's olez somebry to shape eaur ends, rough-yure 'em as we will, an' aw could ha gien a twirl to his ringlets 'at 'd ha suited him, aw think. Does oather on yo want a little reaunt table o' mi own makin? Aw've one to sell chep."

"Art a joiner, too, then?"

"Aw like fill mi time up a bit wi joinerin i' frosty weather, when aw cawn't wortch i' th' garden. Aw knocked this machine together mysel, see yo, an' it's noane a bad un. But i' summer aw'm busy at th' fleawer shows. Aw've taen lots o' prizes for salary an' brocolate, an' 'at geraniums aw care for nobry."

"How much of all this can be true?" John whispered to me. "The admirable Crichton was a simpleton compared with this youth."

"Oh! it's thrue enough, aw darsay. Some o' these moor-end lads con turn their honds to owt. What else con ta do, lad?"

"Nay! yo known abeaut o neaw, nobbut a bit o' clock an' watch fettlin ov a Sethurday, or puttin a brokken window in at odd times——"

Th' poet had stood it as long as he could, an' he brasted off into a laugh 'at met ha wakken't o th' folk i' t' cemetary, an' rowlt abeaut on th' hedge-bottom howdin hissel. Scowcroft sit, cool an' yezzy, lookin at us wi th' same owd twinkle, swingin one leg o'er t'other as comfortable as could be; an' filled his time up wi whistlin whol we geet wynt enough to talk again.

"Well, there's one thing abeaut thee," aw said; "tha doesn't cut mich dayleet to waste wi o thoose jobs gooin on. Iv Docthor Watts had com'n across thee he'd ne'er ha written that greight epic poem ov his,

> 'Satan finds some mischief still
> For idle hands to do.'"

"Mischief's owt but still, mostly," Scowcroft says; "but haever, yo'n no need to be freeten't o' me wastin oather dayleet or candle-leet. Aw've ne'er hawve time enough."

"Nowe, an' tha ne'er will have whol tha keeps thryin to do o th' wark o' this side th' hills. But tha'll ha saved a fortin afore long at t' rattle tha'rt gooin at, an' then tha con tail off a bit, an' thry whether tha con live beaut wortchin or not."

"Aw've no 'casion to thry that," t' grindher said. "Aw know neaw. Aw s' olez ha summat gooin on whol aw'm wick; but whether we con keep eaut o' th' warkheause or not aw cawn't tell. We s' see."

"Well, get forrad wi thi wark, an' do th' best tha con. We'll lev him, John, afore he's clen ruinated. Get that wheel twistin, lad; it'll be dark afore long."

"Bi gum! yo're reet theere," Scowcroft says, nippin onto his frame again. "Aw've three pair o' sithers here yet to start on, an' to be at a lark show i' Norden at hawve-past twelve. Aw s' ha to be shappin."

He buckled to wi a rattle, an' we turned off across th' fields toard Brodehaugh, laughin an' talkin o'er him a good way.

We were passin a row o' cottages just aboon Bamford, when a chap coome eaut o' one on 'em carryin a brid cage, an' hung it up on a rail at th' dur. Then he stood an' shook his neighve at it, and rowl't eaut sich a basket o' fleawers i' th' swearin line 'at we could fair smell 'em.

"Tha seaunds a bit put eaut," aw said. "What's to do wi thee?"

We made him eaut to be a cobbler by his appron an' waxy fingers, an' his style o' walkin wi one knee bent an' t' other stiff.

"Aw could wring it neck," he co'd eaut.

"What is it, a layrock?" aw axed him, peepin through t' wood ribs o' th' cage at th' poor freeten't brid hutchin itsel into t' fur corner. "It 'd like to wring thy neck too, aw darsay. That's a rare big cage tha's fund it to live in."

"It's six inch bi eight," he says. "Heaw mich moore done yo want?"

"Nay! it should be enough for a brid 'at's bin used to th' four winds for woles an' th' sky for a lid. There's hardly reawm for t' poor thing to turn reaund, to be sure; but aw see it's wearin it tail fithers deawn to t' reet length as fast as it con shap. Is that what tha were swearin abeaut?"

"Not it!" he says. "Aw care nowt whether it's a tail on or not iv it 'd nobbut sing. Aw've gien a lot o' brass for it, expectin it were a rare whistler, but aw'm done again! It's wur nor a stone-smatcher—that *con* gie three cheeps an' a whistle, an' then o'er again; but this is too idle for owt!"

"I don't think you would sing very well shut up in a box," John said; an' th' cobbler stared at him. "Turn it out, and then see."

"It should twitther here, iv onywheere," says th' cobbler. "It's cage reared."

"Suppose you had been born in a dungeon just high enough for you to stand straight in, so narrow that your extended arms could reach the walls, and lighted by a closely barred window. You would see, perhaps, a streak of green country glittering outside your prison, watch golden sunlight and shadowy cloud pass over it, and hear the wind rustle and rush in uncontrolled liberty. You would peer through at the hand-breadth of sky that represented your world, and pant and struggle with vain longing. Day would follow day with monotonous and killing regularity, your food and water would sicken and satiate without satisfying; and so buried alive, cut off from all human society, ravings, curses, or prayers all unheeded, what would you do—sing, or knock your head against the wall?"

"Tha'll ha me cryin afore long, iv tha talks so," th' cobbler said. "But tha doesn't myen to say a brid con feel o that?"

"Look at it!" John said. "Do you see that dim eye and drooping wing? How do you account for them? Do you call that a cheerful bird or one suffering incessant pangs?"

"Thee keep it shut up, owd mon," aw said. "It'll pine away to bill an' skin i' tuthri week, an' tha con tak it between thi finger an' thumb an' use it for a squaker, same as t' childher getten at fair-times. It'll sing then!"

"Goo thi ways!" th' cobbler co'd out, rivin th' cage dur oppen. "Aw don't believe tha's wit enough to fly, but there's a chance for thee neaw iv tha's a wild gift."

We o stood back an' watched th' layrock. It hopped to th' cage dur, popped it yead eaut, an' then hutched back again, gav a faint chirp, spread it wings, an' made a jump at th' sun. Afore it 'd fluttther't up twenty yard it brasted off into song 'at coome teemin deawn on us in a silver rain o' seaund, an' we stood oppen-meauthed watchin it as long as we could see.

"That bangs o!" th' cobbler said. "It could sing like that, an' ne'er leet on!" He rove th' cage deawn an' smashed it into a score o' bits on th' flags. "Iv ever aw shut another layrock up may aw be——"

"Here! howd on!" aw co'd eaut. "There's a chapel noane so fur off. Iv tha wants ony moore brids get a bantam or two, an' let these cleaud-skimmers a-be."

"Fifteen shillin gwone i' fithers, an' not enough left to stuff a bowsther!" he said. "But there will be a bit o' firewood eaut o' th' job, shuzheaw."

We left him pikin his chips up, an' took to th' fields again. Aw pointed eaut o th' grand seets as we went on—Know' Hill, Clay Lone Reservoir (wayther has to run upbroo to get into that), Ashoth Colliery an' Chapel, Yeawood, Bluepits, Tandle Hill, an' o maks; an' when we coome to th' valley top lookin deawn into Carr Wood aw said,

"We'll goo wi shut meauth an' oppen e'en neaw, for th' scenery's beaun to gate."

Then aw took John bi th' neck, lurried him deawn th' broo, upended him on th' owd bridge at th' bottom, an' axed him what he could see.

"I see a brook flowing from the north," he said. "It passes under our feet, and winds away to the south-west, gurgling. The water runs between grassy banks on one hand, over-arched by trees, through a ferny glen shut in on one side by a vertical wall of rock, studded with moss patches and flowering plants like pictures on a screen. Southward the banks rise into craggy heights, the trees gather taller and thicker, and the general aspect is so inviting that I propose we shall immediately turn our steps in that direction."

"We'll go deawn that road, iv that's what tha myens. Aw'm beaun wi sthraight feet mysel, but tha con punny iv it's ony comfort to thee. But afore we gwone just let me dhraw thi notice to tuthri points tha's missed. Thar't cheted i' thinkin that's wayther i' th' brook: it's chemical exthract. Sniff at it! Middlin rich? But it's nowt here to what we s' smell lower deawn. Aw didn't yer thee mention that owd ruin't facthry deawn i' th' bottom, nor these empty lodges, a foot deep wi slutch, noather."

"Very true; I tried to ignore them as far as possible. The geological formation of the neighbourhood would be worth examining if we had time."

"Very like, but that's nowt mich i' my road. Aw con tell a cob o' coal fro unslecked lime, an' chip a hen-trough eaut ov a pavin stone; but that's abeaut t' length o' my geology."

We followed th' brook deawn into Carr Wood, howdin eaur noses to keep in as mich o' th' sweet scent as we could; an' i' five minutes we were lost in a green grove o' beech, willow, birch, ash, elm, an' oak; cooled an freshen't wi threads an' sprinklins o' fo'in weet, an' carpeted wi fern, lev mowld, an' moss. There were a rare lot o' whistlin an' singin gooin on i' t' three tops, an' it reminded me o' bein at th' same spot i' spring, an' seein two cuckoos hop abeaut, followed bi o th' brids i' t' wood, chattherin an' saucin. Aw towd th' poet abeaut it, an' thried to make him undherstond heaw grand th' woody slopes an' heights looked at that time, when t' threes had o getten their new clooas fro th' wareheause, hawthorns stood white wi bloom like sugar't weddin-cakes in a confectioner's window, an' dashes o' bluebells lee abeaut as iv some carless chilt had bin a buyin peawdher blue an' slatther't it on t' road wom.

"Surely," he says, "this abominable stench would be smothered by the flowers at that time?"

"Nay; not it!" aw said. "There's a dyel o' weft i' this stink. It'll ratch. There's no smoorin it. Just ston here where t' wayther's breighkin i' suds among t' rocks, an tak a good sniff. Tha's no need to spare it—there'll be enough to goo reaund."

"Yes; more than enough. Why, this ravine would rank among the finest for miles round here if it had a fair chance. It combines the beauties of Ramsden and Turvin, and is on a larger scale than either; but you can't tread along the rocks and stones in the stream here as you do there, seeing the water slide and break over the falls in glittering drops like——like——"

"Like wayther—what else? Or is it fresh-dhrawn pop tha'rt thryin to think on?"

"No; molten crystal."

"Come thee on!" aw said. "This smell's gettin into thi

Punny, to turn in the toes.

yead, an' makin thee talk moore hee-flown nor ever. Aw mun get thee eaut ov here afore summat wur happens."

Aw took him through Simpson Clough, up Birtle Road, through some counthry lones an' a fielt or two, reaund to Ashoth Valley; an' theere aw set him on th' broo top, i' full seet o' th' windin brook gurglin through wood an' meadow i' th' stillness o' that quiet nook—a temple roofed wi green levs, wi three-roots for stairs, an' grase for floor-cloth—an' said, "Heaw neaw?"

He took in a deep breath, but said nowt; an' we wandhered deawn into th' cool restful shades, crossed a balancin-pow 'at's reckon't to be a bridge, an' climbed up into th' common world again.

We bwoth fund eaut o ov a sudden 'at we were hungry, so aw made for th' aleheause bi t' shortest cut. It were gettin to'ard four o' t' clock, an' we'd noather bitten nor supped sin' levin wom. Aw began to cackle abeaut ham an' eggs, an' we sprinted up th' broo like two greyheaunds in a race.

"What a view!" John brasted eaut as soon as he londed on th' top; an' he gawped reaund wi o his e'en.

> "Here the hollow vale,
> Fringed with dense woodland, to the twisted brook
> Sinks, and afar before us gently rise
> The low green hills, while toward the setting sun
> Spreads wide an undulating plain that seems
> Illimitable as the reach of time."

"Come inside, lad!" aw said. "There's no need to let everybody yer 'at tha's gwone off thi yead. Let's get summat t' eight, an' then we'll talk abeaut scenery."

So aw pood him into th' aleheause parlour, an' rang th' bell. T' yead waither coome, wi t' cloth cap an' smile he olez wears, an' aw said,

"Neaw Moses; ax th' owd lady to rear her clay pipe again th' oon an' stir abeaut wi fryin pon an' taypot; an' whol we're waitin fot us some wom-brewed, an' bring thi bill in wi th' parcel."

He grinned an' went, an' coome again; an' aw towd him to put his finger up as soon as ever th' baggin were ready, for we'rn bwoth clemmed.

"Yo'll be like to wait a bit," he says; there's nine afore yo."

"Well, be as sharp as yo con, an' don't keep us waitin two heaurs an' a hawve, same as yo did blint David one singin day."

"Nowe, aw wain't," says Moses; an' he were as good as his word, for it weren't long afore he coome to th' dur, put his finger up as aw'd towd him, an' said, "Baggin."

"Come on, John," aw said, an' took him upstairs into one o' th' tay rooms—a long narrow pleck, like a shootin gallery, wi

Pleck, place.

white-weshed woles, a dyel table deawn th' middle, an forms to sit on. There were hawve a dozen folk i' th' reawm when we went in, but they filled theirsel an' pyched off bi odd uns whol there were nobbut three left at th' top end—a mon an' woman, an' a little lass. Aw couldn't get it eaut o' mi yead 'at aw'd sin th' woman an' t' chilt afore, but couldn't make eaut wheere; they were like somebry aw knew, an' yet unlike, an' aw'd a quare fancy 'at they were lookin too weel off an' content to be gradely.

Heawever, aw geet forrad wi mi baggin an' bother't noane. John showed a dyel too mich appetite for a poet; butthercake melted an' taycakes wapped eaut o' seet, bacon hud itsel, an' th' hen eggs met have had wings. We like made th' provan hutch up, an' were just slackenin off a bit when aw felt a hond laid on mi shooldher an' turned to find th' young woman at mi elbow, lookin at me wi weet e'en. It sthruck me o in a minute! Aw beaunced up, geet howd ov her hond, had a good look at her, an' co'd eaut,

"Yo're th' clemmin woman me an' Billy let on at Stubbins, an' yon's yor little lass! Well! aw ne'er were so plez't i' mi born days!"

We sit deawn on th' form an' yeawl't together, an' th' poet gated slattin weet abeaut his side o' th' table like a good un. Th' chilt ran up an' said.

"What are you crying for, mother?"

"For joy, love," hoo says. "See! Who is this?" pointin at me.

Th' little lass looked an smil't, but didn't know me again. Childher's memories are short, an' it's a rare good an' wise ordherin 'at they should be, bless 'em!

"You don't remember him," t' mother said. "Well, some of us can, and will."

Then hoo showed me a brooch hoo were wearin, an' what done yo think it were? Th' shillin aw'd gien her; set i' gowd, wi a glass front! It happen't to be a new shillin, an' a very tidy brooch it made.

"Husband!" hoo co'd eaut, turnin toard th' chap, sittin oppen-meauthed gawpin at us; "this is one of the good friends who helped me in my great trouble a few weeks ago. Can you find any words to thank him with?"

He coome forrad, took mi hond, an' said, "No! and I shall make no attempt. Friend! when my wife got to Bolton that day and told me of the state she had been in, it drove me nearly crazy. You may judge what gratitude I felt towards you for your kindness—"

"Give o'er wi thee," aw said; "there's bin enough o' this! Yo known weel enough, missis, it were o Billy's doin, an' aw'd nowt to do wi shappin th' job. Goo an' cry o'er Billy!"

"I've been," hoo says, wi a twinkle in her e'en; "and what do you think he said?"

"Summat quare, aw darsay."

"He said it was a mistake going to him, as it was all t' other chap's doing."

"Nay! Well, that is a thumper!"

"And he said if I would insist on slattherin saut-wayther on his scoured floor, simply because he had given us a cake o' brade and a railway ticket, he would spend all his savings in a gold watchguard and black coat; and, in his own words, 'Cob talk at helpless folk astid o' hawpnies.'"

"Well, well! aw am fain to see yo, missis, for sure! So they'n pieced yo up at th' hospital, maisther?"

"Yes; I soon got about again. My employers behaved very well, and took care that we wanted for nothing, and I have a very good place with them now. We have never looked behind us since that one tight squeeze."

"Well, yo mun be thankful for it," aw said, "an' thry to be good childher. See yo at th' little lass an' John cwortin. He's getten her on his knee neaw, an' looks as iv he could eight her beaut sugar. Yo mun get thick wi John; he's a poet, it's thrue, but it's noane otogether his faurt, poor lad!"

"You are the prettiest little girl I have seen for a long time," John were sayin, an' th' chilt took to him as iv they'd bin brought up together. "If your goodness turns out to equal your beauty it will be very satisfactory."

"Howd thi din!" aw said; "thryin to freeten a little fairy like that. Aw've no patience wi o th' cant aw yer talked abeaut good looks; as iv folk were forced to sken, or catch th' smo pox, or lame theirsel, or summat, afore they con be woth aught. Aw didn't expect sich talk fro a chap wi thy sense."

"Dear me! what have I done now? The fat's in the fire with a vengeance this time! I never meant to imply that the child would turn out badly, or that she was at all likely to do."

"Nowe; aw know. But beaut myenin it, or thinkin, tha's getten howd o' th' common rubbitch 'at's talked, an' cawn't look at a pratty face beaut fancyin th' dule's undher it. Tak beauty when tha finds it an' be thankful; an' never deaubt 'at Him 'at makes th' eautside fair an' sweet con fit th' inside wi a clen soul. What an owd foo aw am, to be saucin an' carryin on this road!"

These good folks couldn't stop wi us long, as they wanted to get forrad to Norden, where they'd some friends to see; so we walked deawn wi 'em as fur as Hooslem Fowd, an parted wi o maks o' good wishes.

We turned back an' followed th' brook up through Coal Bonk wood for hawve a mile, findin some molten crystal at last, for it's

Sken, squint.

as bonny a rindlet as we con show onywheere abeaut, an' comes through t' meadows as sweet an' fresh as when it levs it yeth-curtain't bed hee on th' hills aboon.

Afther a while we climbed up th' hill again toard th' chapel an' aleheause, pyerched side bi side fair on th' top. We went onto th' beawlin green, an' theere aw set John wi his face toard Bamford, an' axed him what he could see.

"Many things," he said; "much more than can be told. Many towns, trees, fields, and, above all, long chimneys, embraced by the wide-stretching, semicircular horizon. Don't bother me for a description; I am content to simply look and admire. What a distance we command westward!"

"Dost see yon clump o' threes on th' Tandle Hill, like th' owd prophet lookin deawn on his promised lond, flowin wi filth an' money?"

"Yes."

"Just o'er that hilltop, bare as it looks fro here, there's a big shady wood, wi rabbits an' brids in it as thick as seeds in a fig. Tha should sit theere, wi thi e'en turn't up an' a book i' thi honds, undher one o' th' owd oaks, an' have thi porthrait takken. Tha'd look summat like a poet then."

"Drop it, you elderly nuisance!" John said. "There is no end to your humbug. Is it because I am a pilgrim and a stranger that you are always trying to take me in?"

"What's t' use ov o my experience iv folk wain't let me teighch 'em? Let's sit us deawn a bit an' watch th' beawlers."

There were a bit o' sport gooin forrad on th' green. Five or six sets o' players were wortchin away; cobbin their jacks eaut, an' dhrawin o maks o' thriangles wi th' crossin o' their side-heavy woods. One owd brid, wi a very dhry, solemn look abeaut him, could welly make his beawls talk. They went rowlin up to th' jack, an' worted o'er toard it as iv they'rn wick, an' doin it o' purpose; or neaw an' again, when t'other players had blocked t' road up, th' owd chap 'd let fly wi a bit moore weft nor common, an' wap! yo'd see t'other woods scatther't abeaut, an' his own huggin th' jack like two beads on a bant. He kept thryin to teighch his partner—a shamblin young fellah co'd Bumper—but couldn't bump mich into him.

"Get middlin o' thumb bias on," th' owd un said. "Tha just wants to slur in between yon two, an' then we're reet. Dunnot go too savage; it's deawn-broo theere, think on."

"Bias be hanged!" says Bumper. "Aw'm beaun to aim fair at th' coalpit chimbley, an' whuzz in among 'em. We're three points at front yet."

"Who's getten 'em?"

"Well, yo'n getten 'em, Lijah; an' yo'll be gettin tuthri moore yet. Watch me, neaw!"

He cobbed his wood, an' it went wutherin away a couple o' yard off what he aimed at, rowl't off th' green, an' let wi a soss again th' rails.

"Is it makin for Yeawood Church?" Lijah axed. "Or is it for swimmin deawn th' brook? But for that bit o' joiners' wark it 'd ha bin at Simpson Clough bi neaw."

Bumper fot his wood, lookin a bit sheepish, an' made rayther a betther job o' th' next he sent.

"Noane a bad un," Lijah said, followin th' shot wi his practised e'en. "It wants legs, or else. Tha mun larn to come reaund wi a bit moore ov a sweep."

"Sweep Owdham!" Bumper sheauted. "Let's see yo byet it."

Lijah squinted once at th' jack, deliver't his beawl smooth an' yezzy, picked up his bit ov oilcloth, an' marched across th' green.

"It'll ne'er lond!" Bumper co'd eaut. "Noane wick enough, Lijah! Yo con beawl noane."

Lijah nobbut looked at him, an' then watched his wood. It ran just t' reet length, but a bit wide; an' when we o thought it 'd stopped it worted o'er an' rowl't fair on to th' jack.

"There's a broo yon!" sheauted Bumper. "Sithee! that's a sthroke o' luck, owd un. Th' greaund fo's theere!"

"Hasta just fund it eaut?" axed Lijah, walkin up slow an' cool, danglin his oilcloth. "*Aw've known that ten year.*"

That sattl't Bumper. When th' gam were up he bowted, lookin as iv he ne'er wanted to see a beawlin-green again, an' Lijah geet a partner wi rayther moore abeaut him.

It's a good gam, this beawlin; plenty ov intherest, beaut too mich excitement, good exercise for o maks o' folk, an' givin' th' owd uns a chance o' howdin their own wi young uns. There met be a good papper written abeaut it, tellin heaw it started, who won th' first match, heaw umbrell greens were fund eaut, heaw Hawkins played a reaund to get his hond in for beawlin cannon-bo's at th' Spaniards, an' heaw Springer, fro Norden, banted Bluepits Joe one Ashoth Wakes.

It isn't everybody knows there is a Wakes at Ashoth. It leets first ov ony on 'em, olez gatin on th' Monday next afther t' twelfth o' July; an' at one time there used to be greight stirrins. Aw were tellin John abeaut it as we sit on a side bench watchin th' players. Aw happen't to be up at th' last do, an' geet a rare time on't for a couple ov heaurs i' th' aleheause kitchen. Abeaut twenty chaps were sittin reaund th' woles, th' owd dame sit rockin at th' hobend, wi her long clay, Moses nipped reaund waitin on, an' th' young women were as busy as bees, cookin, weshin up, an' shappin i' general. Some o' th' chaps had made a full day on it, some had com'n up i' th' afthernoon, an' some when t' facthries stopped at neet. Th' first lot were as full ov ale as they could howd beaut fo'in o'er it, th' hawve timers were just nice an' bermy, an' th' edge

o' dark fellahs were as reet as bobbins, laughin at th' fun. Aw were among th' last lot, an' there were a rare good singer among us, too—a chap i' spectacles 'at coome fro somewheere near. He gav us "Johnny Sands," for a start, an' made us crack wi laughin; an' then for a change he poo'd his mournful stop eaut, an' fot tears fro everybody i' th' hole, hissel an' o. He did it wi a simple little ballit abeaut a daughther, wi a babby at her breast, gooin back i' th' neet to her owd wom, an' co'in on her fayther to let her in. Wi thremblin honds hoo knocked at th' door,

"And the cold wind came sweeping across the wild moor."

Last line o'er again bi full chorus, in a whisper, very slow an' sweet,

"The cold wind came sweeping across the wild moor."

T' fayther yerd in his chamber aboon, an' knew his daughther's voice; but he made no seaund, an' o i' vain t' poor thing knocked at th' weel-known door,

"And the cold wind came sweeping across the wild moor."

Chorus rayther leaud, but wi feelin,

"The cold wind came sweeping across the wild moor."

Th' neet deepen't an' snow gated fo'in; th' cowd-hearted fayther lee still i' bed, thinkin ov his daughther's shame; an' hoo, poor lass! sunk to th' greaund, too wake an' freeten't to knock longer at th' close-shut door,

"And the cold wind came sweeping across the wild moor."

Chorus as afore, but very soft,

"The cold wind came sweeping across the wild moor."

An' what seet met that fayther's e'en, when, at morn, he coome deawn th' stairs? Theere lee his dyead daughther, claspin her livin babby, i' th' snow pil't up reaund his door,

"And the cold wind came sweeping across the wild moor."

Chorus, in a whisper,

"The cold wind came sweeping across the wild moor."

Soon dee'd that cruel fayther, an' full soon t' babby followed it lost mother; they o lie i' th' churchyard neaw, an' th' villagers point eaut their haunted cottage, wi t' mowldherin door,

"While the cold wind comes sweeping across the wild moor."

Chorus, deein away,

"The cold wind comes sweeping across the wild moor."

Lee, lay.

"What's to do wi thee, John?" aw said. "Arta snivellin again? Aw'll be hanged iv it isn't wur nor hawkin Spenish onions, gooin eaut wi poets!"

"Come!" John says, dhryin his e'en, "confess that this touching ballad is your own."

"Nay! It o happen't just as aw towd thee. Ax th' owd dame, or Moses oather, or Jim, th' gamkeeper. Iv aw could make th' heart-sthrengs dither that road aw'd give o'er weighvin. It made maut-juice run eaut o' some o' their e'en aboon a bit, an' they'd fain have had th' singer gooin on o neet iv he'd bin hard. Nobry could follow him to do ony good. One owd cock thried to twitther,

'Mi-bowd-foo-mart-hun-thers-come-list-en-to-me,
Aw'll-sing-yo-a-bit-ov-a-dit-ty;'

but he could nobbut think o' two lines, an' iv his memory had bin reet we should ha stopped him, for he were grindin it eaut moore like a coffee-mill nor a Christian. Ah, we'd a rare do, tak it otogether."

When we'd sit a while cookin i' th' warm sun, an' sin as much beawlin as we wanted, aw began wondherin what we were to do next. John were off eaut o' th' world again, starin forty mile across th' hills, his long fingers itchin to be scrawlin some moore similes deawn; so to stop his brains fro turnin aw wakken't him up wi a clap on th' back an' said: "Let's see iv we con get i' th' chapel; aw darsay it'll be oppen. There's a little orgin theere 'at'll happen plez thee."

"One with a handle?"

"Oh, nowe! it's one o' th' gradely mak; wi pipes stonnin up o reaund, two rows o' teeth, an' a knockin-off rod stickin eaut o' one side. It taks two folk to wortch it."

"Very convenient arrangement having chapel and tavern next door to each other," John said.

"It's like hondy, for sure. On singin days they takken th' collection plate reaund th' alehouse, scrattin up o th' brass they con. Aw guess t' parson thinks copper's no wur for bein weshed i' berm. Aw'm oft up here on a fine Sunday, sittin i' th' graveyard hearkenin th' sarvice. Th' singin seaunds betther eautside nor in: th' parson's quiet voice runs on at a steady throt; th' rosy-cheeked sexton, in his fine black geawn, stons wi th' bell-rope i' one hond an' t' dur i' t'other; t' greaund thrembles undherfoot wi th' deep-rowlin orgin pipes; brids twirl abeaut, whistlin; th' fleawers smell sweet, an' th' owd elms spread their green skirts o'er 'em, shakin i' th' warm wynt 'at stirs yor whiskers an' cools yor cheeks as yo pyerch on th' wole; an' th' hills ston up o reaund, hearkenin too, but sayin nowt. But aw s' talk thi yead off, lad! Aw'm doin aboon mi share to-day."

We fund two or three curious owd gravestones in th' buryin-greaund. Accordin to th' dates they gated plantin folk at t' seauth side o' th' church first, tailin off north an east, an' savin th' west end, as usal, for th' fashionables. Th' owdest date we could see were May 22nd, 1780, when John Burch dee'd; an' next to him coome John Barns, toard Kesmas i' 1783. There met be some laid deawn afore these two Johns, for some o' th' stones are just plain flags; as iv poor folk had put 'em theere 'at couldn't afford to pay for havin 'em written on, an' so had to let their dyead relations lie wi nowt but a rough slice o' rock to mark th' spot where they'd hutched away into th' dirt. There's plenty ov epitaphs knockin abeaut o' one mak an' another. This is one fro t'seauth-west corner :—

"Life is like an Inn where travellers stay,
Some only Breakfast, and so pass away,
Others for Dinner wait, then go full fed,
The oldest only sup and go to bed;
Large are their Debts that tarry out the day,
They which go soonest have the least to pay."

Here's another, o'er th' top ov Esther Chadwick, buried i' 1852 at twenty-one year owd. There's a sweet, owd-fashion't savvour abeaut it, an' signs ov a practised hond :—

"Alas! she well knew the remediless smart
That wilders the brain and that withers the heart,
Envelopes existence and shrouds it with care,
That weighs down the spirit and bids it despair.
But the clouds of distress gather round her no more,
Her fears are all fled, and her anguish is o'er,
And we trust, while we sigh with affection and love,
That her gloom is dispelled by the glory above."

An' this is betther again—bwoth simple an' grand :—

"Jesus protects: my fears begone!
What can the rock of ages move?
Safe in Thy arms I lay me down,
Thy everlasting arms of love."

We borrowed th' chapel keigh off th' londlady, an' went in to have a look reaund. It's a clen, snug little place, nicely fitted up an' painted. Th' woles are hung wi th' creed an' commandments, tuthri black an' white mournin tablets, an' a picther o' t' royal arms i' breet colours. On th' west wole, undher a gallery, a board hangs wi this painted on :—

Requiescant in Pace.

Near this place rest the mortal remains of Benjamin Cass of Bircle, aged 64, and Alice his wife, aged 76, obt. Octr. 1st, 1825.

Let the man who now lives without GOD in this life,
Give Ear to a Voice from the Grave;
Tho' he look for to-morrow, the Murderer's Knife
May attack when there's no one to save.

Keigh, key.

We look'd for to-morrow as we went to repose
Thro' the night on our lone humble Bed,
But the Murderer came and the sun never rose
To us—for our Spirits had fled.

Live then to God whilst thou livest below,
And to Him give each Day as it flies;
Prepare for the Grave, that when dead Thou may'st go
To dwell with thy God in the Skies.

We fund th' orgin unlocked, an' when we'd finished lookin abeaut us, John climbed onto th' stoo, rooted eaut some music books, an' axed me to blow for him.

"I'll give you a recital," he says. "There is plenty of good stuff here. Will you have Mendelssohn or Bach?"

"Aw s' be most use at th' back, aw darsay; but oather on 'em 'll suit me, back or front. Let's yer summat soft an' sweet, deein away five mile off an' then rowlin back a far-fot lwod o' music on a theausand wheels, crashin through forest, swirlin across river an' poand, rivin rock an' meauntain fro their deep roots, an' swellin eaut into a world-shakin clamour; to sink again, lower and lower, little by little, across far-off hollows an' levels, whisperin o' comfort an' everlastin rest."

"That's a crescendo with a vengeance," John co'd eaut, starin at me as iv he thought aw're gooin off it. "Where am I to find a composition of that sort?"

"Composition be hanged!" aw said. "Put thi fingers on th' keighs an' squeeze some poethry eaut on 'em. Make 'em talk!"

So we gated. Aw wortched an' he played, an' between us we turn't eaut some tidy bits o' stuff. One on 'em he towd me to tak particlar notice on. Aw did as aw were ordher't, an' i' mi own yead wove th' music into this:

A human soul, sthrong an' beautiful, but restless—unsattl't. A spirit ov evil, shapin itsel i' th' soul's likeness, creeps near wi temptin talk; tells his tale o'er an' o'er again, gainin i' peawer, when, hush! fro some good angel comes a soft, sweet sthrain, whisperin heavenly calm; th' baffled imp ceawers i' silence for a minute, an' then cobs back a mockin onswer, givin place again to that solemn warnin song. Then th' evil spirit changes his shape a bit, an' thries another dodge on, getherin up spite an' scorn i' grooin fury; but undher o his fumin, not to be smoor't, flows on that quiet angel song, gainin greaund bit bi bit, risin i' pitch an' sthrength, whol th' imp o' darkness flies wi a long yell o' despair; an' freed fro sthrife an' restlessness th' purified soul hearkens to that sweet, savin sthrain, soft as a breath, but swellin into one mighty chorus o' majesty an' peawer.

"John," aw said, "that's music. There's bin a poet's brain behinnd that. What dost co it?"

Poand, pond.

"It is the first movement of Mendelssohn's sonata in F minor," he says; so aw towd him what aw thought abeaut it, an' he grunted a bit, an' said he reckon't nowt o' thryin to explain music i' words —we met as weel thry to fit a neetingale's song to th' scale.

"Well, we're noane beaun to fo eaut o'er it," aw said. "Let's yer a bit o' that t'other chap tha mention't."

"Bach?"

"Ah; John up t' back, were it, tha co'd him?"

"Listen with all your ears, then, to his Toccata and Fugue in D minor."

"Aw could hearken betther iv we could catch a lad to blow," aw said, wipin th' sweat off mi face. "This is warmer wark nor flue-clenin. Arta beaun to set o th' lot o' pipes skrikin again? It taks middlin o wynt when they're o gooin at once."

"Yes, we shall want them all."

"Goo on, then; aw'll be noane licked bi a German band-maisther, but there'd ha bin a dyel less wynt shifted iv he'd ne'er bin born."

Th' piece started wi a twirl, an' then stopped. Then we'd another bit ov a dither, an' a swift gallopin like a dhrove o' wild horses. That stopped, an' a bit ov a tune coome next, fo'in eaut wi one note 'at would keep talkin eaut ov it turn. That broke off, followed bi bits ov another tune, moore ditherin an' gallopin, an' aw began to see what were up. Owd John had bin just cobbin his thoughts together, slattin tuthri notes abeaut to leet as they would—grand bits o' thought they are—no babbywark—an' just as aw fund eaut what he were at there coome a hondful o' solid, heavy chords, wi a bowd, cheerful run on th' pedals, an' aw said to misel, wipin mi yead wi one hond an' blowin hard wi t'other, "Th' owd chap's getten it neaw; he's beaun to start ov his wark." Sure enough he in wi a shuttle, set his loom on, an' a rare cut he wove i' tuthri minutes. Aw soon fund eaut he were runnin a Jacquard, for he'd four shuttles gooin at once as oft as not, an' whichever on 'em ran eaut he shapped to keep his loom on wi t'other, iv there were nobbut one, like a cliver owd weighver as he were. He put a bit o' fancy wark reight i' t' middle ov his piece, but mixed it in so weel 'at it mended his pattheran astid o' spoilin it; then he slipped th' first lot o' shuttles in again, one bi one, wove away whol his byem geet nicely filled, stopped to scrat his yead an' think a minute, an' then wi a bit o' pushin shapped to deawn his cut afore th' engine stopped wi tuthri giant sthrokes, levin a silence as iv th' world had stopped too.

"Come on," aw said; "let's goo neaw. Tha'll find nowt to lick that so mich. Owd John had no need to live up a enthry, aw yer; he's a dyel bigger chap nor t'other. It's none as yezzy to see what he's dhrivin at as wi th' first mon, but it's summat big an' grand, aw'm satisfied o' that."

Time were gettin on, so John gated thinkin abeaut his thrain wom; an' as he were bund to go back or miss his wark next mornin we shapped toard Rachda bi t' nearest road. Aw stopped him at one spot to show him two lones runnin side bi side fro th' main road toard Bagslate.

"Look here," aw said. "What dost think abeaut this—two roads goin to th' same point, wi nobbut a hedge between 'em?"

"It seems strange, certainly. How do you account for the business?"

"Well, aw've towd thee mony a time, John, 'at it's a quare world. Aw tell somebry or another every week; an' th' owdher aw get th' quarer aw find it. Neaw, we bwoth known a bit abeaut brotherly love, an' o that, but would ta believe 'at two brothers could ha bin sich reet-deawn bowstheryeads 'at they wouldn't walk o'er th' same greaund, an' had to cut a road apiece to keep fro' bein poison't wi th' dust o' one another's feet?"

"Is that so?"

"That's th' tale as aw yerd it."

"This seems a good opportunity for sitting on a rail to moralise for half-an-hour or so. What do you say?"

"O aw con say is tha'll miss t' thrain iv tha does. Aws' ha to tak thee sthraight to th' station as it is. We s' hardly ha time for a stirrup-cup."

"We must try to bear up against all these misfortunes," John laughed; an' then we poted away like good uns whol we geet into th' teawn. We just managed to knock t' Yokshire thrain, an' aw bundl't th' poet into it.

"When is this return visit to be?" he axed, stickin his yead eaut o' th' window.

"We mun wait whol Spring neaw," aw said; "it's no use me comin afore. These bare hills ov eaurs looken their best i' Winther, but it's noane so wi yor scenery. Next Spring, iv aw'm wick, tha con expect to see me."

"Good-bye to you, then, for the present."

"Good neet, lad; an God bless thee."

"In the Spring!" he co'd eaut, as t' thrain slurred away.

"I' Spring," aw said; an' aw watched t' thrain as long as it could be sin, rowlin forrad to dive into th' long, dark tunnel, an' jump eaut into th' breet, cheerful world at t'other end; an' as aw went wi slow feet toard wom aw felt as empty an' lonely as iv aw'd parted fro mi own son.

TOWN HALL SQUARE, ROCHDALE.

SALLY BRELLA.

T'OTHER neet aw happened to get howd ov a library book eaur Tom had left lyin on t' dhresser, an' fund it were one o' th' novels 'at gwone flyin abeaut so thick neawadays, helpin folk to fill up their spare time an' oppenin new worlds for 'em to wandher in. It were mostly abeaut a very honsome young woman, wi plenty o' brass, a tendher heart, an' wit as sharp as a needle. Hoo went wamblin abeaut o through t' book hopin 'at a very honsome young chap, wi a bit moore brass, were beaun to ax her to wed him; as he did at th' finish, afther wastin t' best part o' their lives playin at babby-heause. They'd nowt else to do 'at aw could see, for noather t' young chap, nor his lass, nor t' writher hissel, seemed to know there were ony mak o' wark i' t' counthry. When aw'd waded o through it aw gated thinkin 'at this young woman, nice as hoo were, could nobbut be reckon't a weel-donned doll, wi nowt like th' shift ov a weighver or windher; for hoo could noather bake nor wesh, an' hoo'd no thrade in her fingers. "Thomas Algernon 'll find thee a dear lump iv he ever does wed thee," aw thought i' mi yead. "Iv he looks undher thi thin crust o' schoo-larnin for brains he'll find noane; iv he wants owt doin i' th' heause he'll be like to pay somebry else, for tha'll be no use; iv he wants his childher nursin and rearin he mun put 'em eaut to seauk, for tha'rt a dyel too fine to bother wi 'em. Tha's some bits o chatther abeaut paintin an' music, copied off other folk; tha's some scrapins o' talk abeaut books tha never read, an' wouldn't undherstond iv tha did; but what arta woth, Imogen, at t' side ov owd Sally Brella?"

Aw felt that were a bit ov a sattler, for Sally's turn't fifty year owd, an' hoo's t' mother o' nine. It'd bother a novelist to get mony fine speeches eaut ov her meauth, for hoo's a dyel betther wortcher nor talker; an' iv he went axin her opinion abeaut th' influence o' German thought i' metaphysics, or thried to read her some o' Breawnin's poems, he'd be moore likely nor not to get a rowlin pin cobbed at his yead. He'd be cheted iv he went seechin beauty in her, too. Sally cawn't show a meauthful o' pearls between ripe cherry lips; her teeth are as bad to find as gaslamps in a Local Board disthrict. There's no glitther in her e'en, noather; they're rayther blear't, iv owt, wi o t' dhree starin hoo's had to do. Her fingers are noane white an' taperin; her foot taks a sizable clog to howd it; her yure doesn't goo ripplin deawn her back i' waves o' gowd. What bit hoo has left hoo tees up in a hanketcher.

Wamblin, wavering.

"Nowe!" aw thought, "tha'rt nowt i' th' novel-writin line, Sally; there's no moore romance abeaut thee nor in a peaund o' blacklead; iv folk are to know owt abeaut thee aw s' be like to tell 'em misel, an' as tha'rt weel woth a shop among these

'Short and simple annals of the poor'

aw'll do it, an' keep weel eaut o' thi road when it's done, fleyed o' gettin a brokken creawn for mi impidence."

Sally's Amos Brella wife. They'n bin teed together aboon thirty year neaw, beaut oather fratchin or pooin at t' knot; they'n ne'er bin short o' noather hard wark, childher, nor meight sin'; they'n brass saved ready for ony backenins 'at may turn up, an' they're bwoth as independent an' sthraightforrad as two folk con be.

Aw recollect th' weddin weel enough. They bwoth lived near me, an' aw'd noticed 'em bein together a good bit for tuthri week, so when aw met 'em one neet i' th' fields aboon Red Brook, walkin on different sides o' th' lone beaut a word to say for theirsels, aw could see they myent business.

Aw've yerd folk reckon to sneer at eaur Lancashire lads an' lasses for their style o' cwortin—gooin gawpin abeaut together for a whol neet wi hardly a word, lookin as iv they didn't belong to one another. Let 'em sneer; it nobbut shows their want o' sense. Love con live an' thrive beaut talk; e'e an' heart con speighk a deeper language nor ony words con shape. Aw know bi misel heaw it is, an' recollect some weel o th' heaurs aw've sit or walked wi mi wife i' eaur cwortin days, brimful ov happiness to know hoo were theere within arm's length, but i' no fettle for talkin. Mi lass ne'er said mich, noather,

> "But to her heart, her heart was voluble,
> Paining with eloquence her balmy side;
> As though a tongueless nightingale should swell
> Her throat in vain."

Sally looked a bit different then fro what hoo does neaw. In her wortchin clooas—grey shawl, clen appron, plain dark frock, an' weel-polished clogs—wi her yure olez smooth an' shinin, an' her womly face breet as a new shillin, hoo made a finer picther in a sensible chap's e'en nor plenty o' donned-up dawdlin ladies ever could do; an' i' th' choir ov a Sunday, tidy, rosy, an' thrim, her sweet threble ringin eaut i' "Rockingham" or "Creawn Him," hoo could weel howd her own bwoth for looks an' wit wi ony lass i' th' chapel. Amos thought so, shuzheaw. He were i' th' choir too—singin bass hawve a yard deep—an' aw believe these two first coome to a gradely undherstondin one rainy practice neet when they'd to walk wom undher t' same umbrell; so there were some good coome ov a singin lesson for once.

Fleyed, afraid.

They made no fuss o'er it, yo known. Amos didn't dhrop deawn o' one knee i' t' slutch, an' brast eaut, "Adorable Sarah! Light of my solitary heart, for many years of patient waiting, look with kindness upon thy trembling lover! Raise him from the lowest depths of unutterable despair to the loftiest summits of unspeakable bliss!"

Oh nowe! nowt o' that mak. It never sthruck t' young chap to kneel, an' iv it had done he wouldn't ha bin likely to do it wi his best black breeches on. O he said were, "Mun we keep company, Sarah?"

"Eh! for shame, Amos!"

"There's nowt to be 'sham't on 'at aw con see. We're noane t' first bi a good tuthri. Aw'm nobbut fyerd o' one thing, an' that is 'at aw'm noane good enough for sich a lass as thee."

"Noane good enough for a four-loom weighver, Amos?"

"That's noane it. Angels are no wur for gettin their wings sprinkl't wi cotton dust. We're bwoth young an' hearty, an' makin a good wage; aw'll shap thee a comfortable wom an' use thee weel, an' we con manage to toar on together some road, aw think."

"Aw mun be gettin wom," Sally said, thryin to put th' sweetheartin off, an wondherin whatever made her heart flutther so mich. "Thank yo for th' umbrell. It's bin very useful. Aw didn't want to get mi bonnet ribbins weet—they cost a shillin a yard."

"Aw'll buy thee some at hawve-a-creawn iv aw mun," says Amos; "but it's a poor look eaut for me when tha nobbut thinks abeaut thi ribbins afther o aw've said."

"Well, good neet; an' thank yo," Sally said, wishin hoo durst just tell him o hoo thought, but takkin care o t' same to look as unconsarn't as iv hoo didn't care a bodle for him.

"Good neet, an' God bless thee," t' poor fellah said, thinkin it were o up wi *his* chance o' gettin her; noane findin eaut whol long afther heaw Sally were thremblin, nor heaw mich sleep hoo lost that neet. He went wom feelin very deawn, an' couldn't eight his supper, so uncommon a thing wi him 'at his mother suspected summat were up, an' axed him two or three score questions in a crack, mendin his temper a lump. Haever, afore Sunday coome reaund t' lad geet his pluck up again, thinkin he'd have another thry when th' sarvice were o'er at neet. Sally were makin off wi two or three lasses 'at lived her road on, but bowd Amos were noane to be cheted i' that shap; he went up to her an' said, carless who yerd him,

"Sarah, come reaund this t'other road. Aw want to tell thee summat."

Neaw, t'other road ran across th' meadows, an' were a dyel t' longest. Sally knew that weel enough, an' knew what turnin back

wi Amos myent; but hoo'd bin studyin what ailed her sin' t' practice neet, made her mind up, an' though feelin shy an' freeten't hoo'd no thoughts o' keepin t' poor lad i' misery longer nor could be helped. So they sthruck across t' fields, heedless o' th' sniggerin lasses starin afther 'em, walkin a good way beaut a word.

"Sarah, doesta like Joe Lomax betther nor me?" Amos axed at last.

"Nowe, aw don't."

"We may as weel link," Amos said, howdin his arm when they'd walked a bit fur. Sally popped her little hond through it, an' they went forrad again, but very slow neaw, whol they coome to th' last fielt, where t' young chap poo'd up an' axed,

"Mun aw kuss thee, Sarah?"

Sally's simple heart were fair lutchin wi love. Hoo said nowt, but turn't her face toard his, an' he gav her sich a long kiss 'at he'd to tak his wynt afther it. Then they'd another kiss or two, or happen a dozen, an' Amos geet so bowd he were for takkin his lass wom an' sattlin things wi her fayther sthraight off; but hoo were too freeten't to let him, so he'd to be satisfied wi walkin o t' road through heaven to t' last sthreet corner, dirt an' set-stones feelin like gowd dust an' diamonds undher his feet, an' levin her wi just one squeeze moore.

Amos an' Sally geet wed, then, as aw were sayin, furnished a cottage, an' set up i' life wi four an' sixpence i' brass, a lod o' coals i' th' cellar, an' no debts. Fro th' first Sally brought a good hawve o' th' week's wage wom, bein a exthra good weighver an' full o' shift; an' when childher coome so fast 'at hoo were forced to stop awom, hoo addl't mony a shillin bi weshin, clenin, an' sich-like. Things were noane o sthraightforrad wi 'em. It were a toss up once whether they o went to th' warkheause or not, for Amos were laid up a good while wi rheumatics, an' wi five childher on her honds Sally looked like bein fast. Their bits o' savins went wi a rattle when there were nowt comin in, an' nine women i' ten 'd ha gien th' job up as a bad un. Sally were noane one o' th' givin-up mak. Hoo geet a new window-bottom put in, set eaut a toffy an' oddment shop, gated bakin loaves, crumpets, moufins, an' what-not, sendin th' owdest childher eaut sellin 'em; an' hoo did so weel 'at when Amos coome reaund he said t' best thing he could do 'd be to fo ill again as soon as it could be shapped, as it paid a dyel betther nor gooin to t' facthry.

It were a grand seet to watch that family when o t' nine childher were grooin up, fillin th' little cottage whol there hardly looked reawm to crom another in. Their style o' sidin th' dinner table were summat to remember. Lobscouse, coffee an' butther-cake, pickl't yerrin, black puddins, sheep yead—owt were reet

Lutchin, palpitating. *Lobscouse*, a hash of meat and potatoes.

for their healthy appetites; so long as th' quantity were theere t' quality ne'er bother't 'em, an' Sally took middlin good care they were nowt short, iv they kept her ladin eaut whol hoo'd nowt left for hersel.

"Iv they mun wortch they mun eight," hoo'd say; an' they'd to do bwoth.

Hutched up together like rabbits in a run, wi nobbut rough plain fare an' makeshift clooas, wi a life ov hard wark an' sthruggle afore 'em o, they were yet as breet an' content as onybody i' th' world. T' young uns were olez considher't first; iv they'd ony dainties i' th' eightin line 'at wouldn't goo reaund, t' little lads an' lasses geet th' first share, an' th' owdher end took their chance beaut grumblin.

Wi clooas it were t'other road abeaut. Owt 'at t' fayther finished wi—breeches, cwot, singlet, or what not—coome in for th' owd'st lad, an' went fro him to th' next; worn spots were cut eaut or petched (not olez wi t' same cloth), breeches were turn't into jackets, an' back again into less breeches, thravellin deawn th' line whol there were a bit o' stuff left; olez comin in at th' finish to make harstone rugs, bed quilts, or map rags. Sally's clooas went to th' lasses i' t' same road, lastin eaut whol warp an' weft 'd howd together. Sunday shoon, caps, bonnets, an' so on did duty for o th' family. As they geet too little for one there were sure to be moore yeads or feet ready to fit 'em; property went fro one to another beaut oather writin off depreciation or botherin wi law suits, an' vested intherests were ne'er thought on. One thing Sally olez shapped, whether times were good or bad wi 'em; that were to turn 'em o eaut dacent to th' schoo ov a Sunday mornin. Years went on, an' th' procession kept grooin whol o th' nine on 'em were gooin together, lookin a sthreetful when they turn't eaut, an' makin folk wondher wherever they were crommed away i' that bit ov a heause; but few or mony, little or big, to schoo they went as reglar as t' clock sthruck.

Things were middlin lively at neets when o th' young uns were at a loase end. Three or four on 'em 'd be runnin abeaut like wick-silver, but wi rayther moore din; little Betty 'd be hutched into some corner, spellin at her book; young Amos, th' family artist, 'd be dhrawin away wi slate an' pencil; James Henry an' Samul Robert, th' owdest lads, 'd be blowin cornet an' clarionet i' th' bedreawm, practisin for th' brass band; Sally 'd fuss abeaut, fo'in o'er 'em, saucin one minute, laughin th' next; owd Amos 'd sit studyin o'er his long clay i' th' nook between fire an' window; an' deawn fro th' attics every neaw an' again 'd come a sthrange, raspin seaund, summat like a joiner sawin planks, for Ephraim were larnin to sing, so t'other lot made him goo as hee up eaut

Harstone, hearthstone. *Map*, mop.

o' th' road as they could, short o' stickin him on th' slate. They thried him i' th' cellar a time or two when he first started, but they couldn't ston him theere at o. There were no moore comfort i' th' heause whol John Thomas, a science class scholar, fund eaut 'at seaund had a thrick o' fo'in upbroo. When they larn't that poor Eph were shifted fro t' bottom to th' top wi a rattle, an' there were quietness again, obbut when a heavy note or two rowl't deawn th' stairs, olez makin Sally think o' brimstone an' thraycle, hoo said, but heaw that were hoo couldn't tell.

Iv ony refin't chap had put his yead into that heause he'd ha bin sure ov a fit—aw myen that mak o' refinement 'at makes folk freeten't ov a creawd, teighches 'em to wear spring glasses whol their e'en are good, put scent upo' their hanketchers, an' think silky Latin betther nor rough rowler-teawel Saxon; an' iv ony woman—lady aw should say—used to sittin idle i' th' pahlour whol a sarvant did t' wark for her had sin Sally's style o' heausekeepin, hoo'd ha fainted sthraight off. Not 'at there were ony dirt, yo undherstond, for Sally olez kept things clen an' wholsome; it were like a want o' polish, a bare plainness abeaut pots an' furnithur, mixed wi sweet savvours o' reausty iron, wool oil, an' cotton sizin off t' childher's clooas, 'at 'd ha sicken't weel-bred folk. For one thing they'd no fancy brackets nor china plates hangin on th' woles, no picther rail runnin reaund, no dado (nor dodo noather), no piano, no umbrell stond i' th' lobby an' no lobby for one to ston in, no bells, no wot waythers upstairs, no wine cellar, no stairs carpet, no muslin curtains, nor nowt. It's a capper heaw they shapped to live, but they did shap it some road, an' throve beside.

But there were tuthri things i' that heause 'at couldn't be hung upo' woles or set eaut on shelves. Love were one. Amos an' Sally brought that into th' spot on their weddin day, an' it's theere yet, shinin breet wi reglar use. Thruth's lamp were theere, olez blazin; givin th' shadows o' lyin an' chetin no chance to gether. Honest independence grew wi a thick stalk eaut o' th' harstone, spreadin healthy branches o reaund; every young Brella rear't undher t' shade o' that hardy evergreen would ha scorn't to beg or owe onybody a bodle, an' sanner ha dee'd nor gwone to th' warkheause. Charity lived wi 'em, never wantin to flit; an' that were very like th' greight saycret on 'em agreein so weel wi theirsel an' other folk, feelin satisfied wi what they had, an olez shappin some road to spare a thrifle when it were needed. But there were no refinement abeaut th' hole. Not a spoontle.

It were so weel known o reaund 'at th' Brellas were throubl't wi this quare complaint o' charity 'at there were welly olez somebry on th' durstep, seechin brass or advice, or happen bwoth; but come as thick as they would noane on 'em could charge Sally wi bein slack at helpin. Iv hoo'd nowt to spare hersel hoo'd find

somebry else 'at had; hoo could ne'er have oppen't her meauth to beg for ony ov her own, but at cadgin for other folk hoo were a stunner.

Aw recollect a while sin' some Kershaws lived at t'other end o'th' row fro Sally. One mornin their little lass—th' first chilt, nobbut a year owd—were takken ill, an' t' mother bowted off, passin every dur i' t' sthreet, to fot Mrs. Brella. Hoo ran in, dhropped into a cheer an' brasted eaut cryin beaut sayin a word. Noane were needed, for o th' neighbours knew weel enough 'at th' chilt were gooin fast.

"Is hoo wur, Dinah?" Sally axed, sthrippin t' dough off her fingers; for hoo were kneighdin.

"A dyel wur," t' poor mother said between her sobs. "What it 'll turn to God knows, but aw'm fyerd hoo's sinkin."

"Is onybody gwone for t' docthor?"

"Aw've nobry to send. Will yo stop wi her whol aw slip deawn misel?"

"Aw'll ha noane o' thee scuttherin up an' deawn th' teawn, an' so near thi lyin-in too. Aw'll fot him."

"What abeaut yor babby?" axed Mrs. Kershaw, for Sally had a new chilt, a fortnit owd.

"Aw'll tak it wi me. T'other little uns are playin 'em at th' back; just keep one e'e on 'em chance they wanten summat, an' aw'll lock up an' goo. Where does yor Joe wortch neaw?"

"Mitchell Hey."

"Aw'll fot him too," Sally said. "Iv owt happens an' him noane here aw s' ne'er forgive mysel."

Hoo lapped t' babby in her shawl an' were off like a rocket to t' docthor's. He were awom bi good luck, an' gated saucin as soon as he seed her.

"A sensible woman you are," he says. "Hardly over your confinement, and rushing about like a steam engine. Carrying the child too. Of course."

"Howd yor din, do," Sally said, busy pinnin th' babby's clooas up. "Yo met think aw were as nesh as th' quality. Yo're wanted up at Keighshaw's, an' soon; so bowt."

"What is the use? I can do no good whatever."

"Goo an' reckon to do then! Is t' mother to be left bi hersel, wi nobry thryin to shap nowt for her? There's some scuse for a bit ov humbug neaw iv ever there were i' this world. Hoo's o bi hersel, poor thing; so be sharp."

"You are right," t' docthor says, turnin serious. "I'll go back with you at once."

"Nay! yo mun find t' road yorsel. Aw'm beaun to Mitchell Hey."

"Certainly! Oh, by all means! Go round by the White House, or Norden, and get a good walk while you are about it.

Nothing like exercise. You will want more physic to-morrow."

"Howd yer din!" Sally said again, an' left him. Hoo thrail't across th' Brodefielt deawn to t' facthry office, sent in for Kershaw an' towd him to get wom as soon as he could. He were very sickly lookin for a young chap, carryin t' thrade mark ov his business in his hollow chest an' reaunt back.

"Aw've bin freeten't o' this o mornin," he towd her. "It's rare an' good on yo to come o this road, Mrs. Brella. Yo're noane fit to be eaut yorsel."

"Ne'er heed, lad; we con fo eaut abeaut that afther. Run wom as fast as tha con."

He shook his yead wi a sad but noane fretful look. "Aw mun run noane up that broo; but aw'll thravel as fast as mi wynt 'll let me."

In abeaut hawve an heaur Sally went into Kershaw's to see heaw things were lookin. Hoo fund 'em bad. Th' chilt lee at it last, wasted away to nowt, but still an' free fro pain. T' mother bent o'er th' bed wi dhry e'en an' dhrawn face, sufferin agony sich as no words could tell. T' fayther, lookin heart-brokken, stood talkin softly to th' docthor in a corner. Th' end coome very soon, breath levin t' little body so gently 'at for a minute t' mother didn't notice 'at that precious life were gwone; when hoo did hoo fell forrad on th' bed wi a chawkin seaund in her throat, but Sally's comfortin arms were reaund her, an' t' poor woman's yead soon rested on t' width o' blue check 'at cover't as motherly an' tendher a heart as ever stirred. Kershaw kissed his chilt's sunken cheek an' took t' docthor deawn th' stairs, levin his wife to Sally—t' best thing he could ha done.

"We must take great care of Mrs. Kershaw," t' docthor said. "In her condition there will be danger if she gives way too much to this trouble."

"It met happen be th' best job iv hoo did," Kershaw said, lookin sattl't i' misery.

"Good heavens, man! What do you mean?"

"Yo known what aw myen, weel enough," t' sufferin fayther went on. "It's o deawn i' yor scientific books, isn't it? Wakely parents 'll breed wakely childher, wain't they; an' th' curse o' consumption gwoes deawn fro generation to generation? Done yo reckon aw cawn't tell what yo thinken abeaut this job? Done yo think aw didn't know th' risk we ran when aw geet wed? Aw took Dinah wi mi e'en oppen; but hoo knew nowt—eh! mi poor lass; to what have aw brought thee!"

His smother't fire flashed eaut on him o in a minute. He broke deawn an' cover't his face.

"I daren't venture to blame you, my poor friend, for we are all blind fools at best; yet, knowing that you were consumptive, it was hardly wise to marry, to say the least."

"Dunnot talk to me i' that cowd-blooded road. Dunnot! Dunnot! Aw were o'er t' yead i' love, mon, when aw wed yon lass." He lifted his white face an' went on. "Done yo think aw cawn't feel love becose aw'm a ignorant facthry chap 'at's never bin to a college? Aw ne'er stopped to reckon chances an' happenins then same as aw should neaw. Aw were a dyel sthronger chap then, beside, an' didn't reetly know aw werenot seaund. Aw'd hopes then—hopes to poo through, an' find things shappin for th' best; hopes o' bein happy an' makin mi wife so. What mun aw do neaw—curse God an' dee?"

"No, no! Don't talk in that wild way, my poor fellow."

"Aw'm noane wild, docthor. Nowt so lucky! Mi brains are steady enough an' mi wits o i' their reet slots. Aw tell yo again it met be t' best thing iv mi wife dee'd neaw an' were saved o t' throuble 'at lies afore her. We s' have another chilt born i' two month. It'll ne'er live! Heaw con it? Iv hoo suffers so mich wi loisin this heaw will it be wi th' next? Aw've two year o' life left, mysel, moore or less; hoo'll see me pinin away whol there's hardly t' framewark ov a mon to heighve into th' coffin, an' hoo'll ha to nurse me through scores o' weary days an' neets, to be left bi hersel at last, teawin for a livin. But for God's sake dunnot turn reaund on me neaw, sayin aw met ha known, or should ha bin wiser, an' sich like. Aw cawn't ston it."

"I won't turn round on you," t' docthor said. "Not likely. We must get you down south for a month or two, and try to set you right. Things may turn out better than you expect."

Kershaw shook his yead wi th' owd sad, patient look, an' went upstairs to his wife.

T' same afthernoon, Sally were finishin her bakin when there coome a middlin leaud ran-tan on th' dur. Hoo oppen't it, seed a parson stonnin theere wi a thick stick in his hond, an' axed rayther sharp,

"Are yo for hommerin th' dur deawn, or heaw?"

He looked as iv he hardly knew what hoo myent, an' said, "I beg your pardon. Can you direct me to the house of a man named Kershaw?"

"What done yo want theere?"

He looked mad at her sperrin him that road. "Excuse me. Will you kindly direct me to the place?"

"Yo'd best come inside a minute," Sally said. "Aw want to have a word wi yo afore yo gwone clattherin upo' folks' durs fit to wakken th' dyead."

He went in an' sit him deawn, pooin off his soft billycock an' showin a yead runnin up to a point at th' top.

"Yo mun be a fresh mon," Sally said, sittin deawn an' smoothin her brat o'er her knees. "Aw've ne'er sin yo afore to mi knowledge."

"I have not been in the town long."

"Well, yo known, they'n a chilt dyead at Keighshaw's, so they wain't want ony mak o' folk co'in just neaw."

"I have thought it my duty to call upon them. I wish to recommend them to a charitable society if they prove to be deserving people."

"Done yo for sure?" Sally co'd eaut, curlin her nose up. "They desarven o yo con do for 'em an' a bit beside, but iv yo're for gettin 'em to a charity office yo'll want two pair ov hondcuffs an' a waggin an' horses."

"I don't comprehend your meaning."

"Nowe, an' Joe Keighshaw wain't comprehend gooin a beggin, noather. He'd sanner clem. He wouldn't like that sperrin 'at charity offices are so fond on noather. Dacent folk don't want o their neighbours tellin when they're forced to beg."

"I hardly follow you," th' parson says. "Does 'sperrin' signify asking questions?"

"Nay! iv yo cawn't gawm gradely English aw met as weel give o'er talkin. What use con yo be at preighchin iv that's it?"

T' parson began lookin as iv he'd had abeaut enough o' Sally. He thried to change th' subject when hoo'd done talkin, an' put his foot into a wur spot nor ever.

"I understand," he says, "that this Mr. Kershaw was greatly to blame for marrying at all. Is it true that he is consumptive?"

"Happen it is," Sally said, screwin her meauth up an' lookin dangerous.

"If people deliberately set the laws of nature at defiance they must take the consequences. You know, my good woman, political economy teaches——"

"Aw know nowt abeaut no tickle commonies," Sally brasted eaut. "Aw've tickle jobs enoo beaut larnin fresh. It's reet enough 'at Keighshaw's gooin deawnbroo, an' has bin a good bit; an' he's noane th' first bi five theausan 'at cotton's made an end on noather. Sendin childher into a facthry at eight year owd, same as Joe were sent, sides 'em off abeaut as weel as owt aw know on, obbut dhreawnin. Neaw, aw'll tell yo what it is, wi yor commonies an' slutch. Stir another yard toard Keighshaw's an' aw'll have o t' women i' t' sthreet eaut to punce yo off th' clod. Just a yard! Yo an' yor commonies! As iv folk were noane miserable enough beaut yor meddlin."

Hoo were bendin o'er th' table bi this time, shakin her neighve in his face, so th' chap thought he'd best be gooin.

"I will call on a future day," he said, bowtin through t' dur, wi Sally afther him, sheautin "Make it a twelvemonth."

As t' parson were turnin th' corner on his road back, another

Gawm, understand.

parson ran again him. They shook honds an' stopped to have a word or two.

"That is a very violent woman in the first house," number one says.

"Indeed!" says number two. "You can't mean Mrs. Brierley, surely?"

"The woman yonder looking out at us. She is a dreadful creature."

"Nonsense, man!" number two laughed. "There is no better woman in the town. What have you been doing to offend her?"

"Nothing in the world. I can't understand the matter in the least. She came at me like a wild cat."

"Did you ever see a wild cat."

"No."

"Have you made any study of the characteristics of Lancashire people?

"None whatever, and after the sample I have just had there is little encouragement to do so. Inferior blood will display itself, I suppose."

"It will, sir," number two said, "whether in aristocrats, parsons, or operatives;" an' he went forrad to wheere Sally stood at her dur, lookin ill crammed.

"Good morning, Mrs. Brierley."

"Good mornin. Are yo makin for Keighshaw's?"

"I have come to ask your advice about that. What do you think?"

"It depends," Sally said, takkin him into th' kitchen an' dustin a cheer for him wi her brat. (Hoo hadn't done that for t'other mon.) "Are yo beaun a blowin 'em up, like yon t'other felly?"

"Blowing them up!" th' parson co'd eaut, fair capped. "What on earth is there to blow them up for at a time like this?"

"A dyel o' things," Sally towd him. "Joe had no business to get wed, had he, wi a wake chest an' a cough? They should have had some brass saved, shouldn't they, astid o' botherin charity offices. They should larn to wortch, shouldn't they, an keep i' their places, an' deny theirsel, an' study thrift, an' above o things mind to slutther sixpence into th' collection box ov a Sunday?" Sally were cryin afore hoo'd done, wi her white brat to her e'en.

"I begin to see how my friend came to think you violent——"

"Iv he co's me aw'll poo his yure for him!"

"I must blush for my cloth," t' parson went on, rayther stern; "but, Sarah, you have known me long enough to be sure that I should never dream of talking such nonsense."

"Yo're betther nor a dyel on 'em, that's reet enough."

"If I go to see these suffering people my duty will be to sympathise with them, and give such poor consolation as can be

found. If heaven is but a dream, as so many people say, it is at least a charming dream; and I for one would rather believe that a universal Father takes these lost dear ones to his arms, setting them

> To dwell in amaranthine fields
> Through never-falling time,

than accept the painful theory that we are dust, animated for an hour only to sink into oblivion's gulf. But the wound in this bereft mother's heart is still bleeding, her anguish must be intense, and I fear a visit from anybody would be disagreeable just now. What do you think?"

"Yo may as weel goo. Yo'll do no harm, shuzheaw, an' yo con cheer Joe up a bit."

"There is another matter. How will they be for the expenses of the funeral?"

"They hannot ten shillin i' th' heause, iv aw mun tell yo what aw think."

"It will cost three or four pounds, won't it?"

"Nay! we mun shap it for two, some road. But ne'er bother yorsel abeaut th' brass; it'll be fund, yo'll see."

Th' parson poo'd a hondful o' brass eaut an' put two sovereigns on th' table. "May I pay the money, as a particular favour to me?"

"Nay! yo're too lat!" Sally said. "Aw'd sattl't it i' mi mind afore yo coome. Aw'll pay it mysel."

"How can you afford it with so many children on your hands? Come, let me pay the money."

"Nowe, aw wain't."

"Will you give this to Mr. Kershaw, then, to use as he thinks fit?"

"Aw will, an' thank yo kindly. But aw mun pay th' buryin brass first, or else Joe wain't let me when he's o this in his pocket. Eh! aw wish o parsons were like yo!"

It were chiefly owin to this good chap 'at Kershaw were brought reaund. He geet Joe's chest examin't, an' fund th' poor lad were noane hawve as bad as he'd thought hissel.

"Pure air," a physician towd 'em. "Get out of the cotton dust for six months, and you will be as right as possible."

"Heaw mun we live o that time?" poor Kershaw axed, feelin hawve saved an' three-quathers lost.

"That shall be my business," th' parson said. "Make your arrangements for going to the Isle of Wight, and I will beg, borrow or steal fifty pounds for you."

Kershaw laughed at him. "Yo myen weel, but yo'd betther save yor wynt. Yo'll ne'er get th' hawve on't."

He were cheted. This parson had a thrick o' gooin forrad wi jobs when he'd started on 'em. He went reaund th' teawn axin

for fifty peaund to save a chap's life, an' geet it in a snift. One rich owd mon stared wi o his e'en, an said,

"My dear sir, I have been asked to subscribe to new churches, organs, stained glass windows, painting, general and particular repairs, missionary funds, clergymen's funds, school funds, Whitsuntide treats, bazaars, concerts, lectures, and all that, often enough; but in all my experience yours is the first case I ever heard of where funds were solicited for a definite individual matter of charity such as this."

"All the more reason why you should give me a handsome subscription now," th' parson said. "The chance may never occur again, you see."

So th' owd brid gav him five peaund, sayin iv they wanted moore he'd make it ten; an' away th' good shepherd bowted to tak th' news to his saved sheep, where aw'll lev yo to guess what Kershaw an' his wife said an' thought, an' heaw three kind hearts were mingled an' mixed together i' love an' gratitude. There's healthy childher enoo i' that family neaw, an' Joe's as fat an' hearty as iv he'd never ail't nowt.

For o Sally were so tendher when owt happened to touch her feelins, hoo could stick up for hersel rarely iv onybody thried to put on her. There were one woman livin just across t' sthreet 'at hoo never could agree wi long at once—a quare cross-grain't piece o' goods, olez back wi her rent, spendin middlin i' ale, an' feelin a grudge again folk 'at kept theirsel dacent an' paid their road. Their rows started abeaut t' childher i' general. One o'th' young Brellas 'd run skrikin to it mother, "Lijah Simpson's bin puncin me!" an' th' job 'd be sattl't. Sally 'd bowt off to th' dur, shake her neighve at little Lijah, safe on his own step, an' sheaut, "Let me catch thee once on this side, tha pousement, an' aw'll teighch thee to shift thi clogs to some pitch."

"What's that yo say'n?" Mrs. Simpson 'd sheaut, poppin her yead eaut, an' then t' gam began.

"What's he bin puncin eaur Sam for? Iv my childher cawn't be letten a-be we'll ha some police on th' job."

"Yor Sam hit him first."

"Nay, not he!"

"Yigh, he did."

"Naught o' th' sort."

"He did that."

"Ne'er i' this world."

"Poo that yead in an' get forrad wi yor bakin astid o' reausin o t' sthreet up wi yor din. An' keep th' sond eaut o' yor moufins."

"Aw'll sond thee, tha besom," Sally 'd slutther, as mad as hoo could howd. "Come here iv tha dar! It'd seem thee betther to get weshed, shap thi husbant his meals somebitlike, an' get yor Sunday clooas fro th' popshop."

T'last rovins o' Simpson's temper 'd fly off th' bobbin then; hoo'd whuzz her arms reaund, wag her neighves, an' scutther in an' eaut ov her kitchen, sheautin as hard as hoo could. "Chawk yorsel wi crompets, yo stuck-up, consayted, felleyin, hecthorin, ugly thing, yo! A scrattin, flint-skinnin, slutch-bakin owd prout! Set a foot on this cosy, an' aw'll make some yure fly. Aw may ston an' watch mi childher be kil't undher mi e'en iv aw'm foo enough."

"Yo'n bugs i'th' heause," Sally 'd bawl as soon as hoo could get a word in. "Deny it iv yo con; wi t' chamber blinds ne'er weshed for a twelvemonth, windows fair lost i' dirt, an' noather blacklead nor swop abeaut th' hole. Ger away wi yo, yo grinnin good-for-nowt!"

"Keep yor own hutch clen, an' ne'er mind other folk," Simpson 'd yell, slaverin wi passion. Hoo'd run into th' heause, bang her dur shut, an' pop eaut again. "Aw'll spend no moore o' mi time talkin to sich a piece o' goods. Yo wanten smoorin i' yor own oon." Hoo'd wap inside again, bowtin eaut i' hawve a crack. "There's ne'er bin no quietness for nobry sin yo coome a-livin up here, what wi t' lads blowin their brass coronets, t' young uns puncin everybody's childher to t' dyeath, an' yo pychin abeaut watchin o 'at stirs—yo back-bitin, scornin, snighin snicket." Inside hoo'd goo, bangin t' dur afther her.

"Goo an' pay what yo ow'n," Sally 'd goo on, carless whether t'other yerd her or not. "What han yo chalked up at th' ale-heause? Livin o' reausty bacon ends, cheese crust, an' o sichlike, to get brass for ale! Aut on yo for a swillin, slotchin, sluttherin baggitch!"

"Dhreawn yorsel i'th' boiler," Simpson 'd yap eaut, just oppenin th' dur fur enough to get her nose through; an' likely enough Sally 'd say summat to fot her onto th' step again, to start o th' gam fro th' beginnin. They'd tail off i' time when they geet weary, an' sulk quietly at one another as usal whol t' next row coome off.

But Simpson lost his job at tailorin one Sethurday, an' very soon there were no brass in his heause for noather ale nor nowt else. On t' top o' that throuble his wife fell ill, an' things gated lookin cheerful for that family. Sally yerd naught abeaut it for a day or two, ne'er havin no thruck wi 'em; but one mornin hoo seed Sam cleautin Lijah on his own durstep, an' knew there mut be summat wrong.

"Sam, thee come here!" hoo co'd eaut. "Lijah, what's getten thi mother?"

"Hoo's ill i' bed iv yo wanten to know," Lijah blubber't, rubbin black weet eaut ov his e'en. "Wait whol aw catch thee, Sam Brella!"

Cosy, causeway.

"What art abusin th' chilt for an' his mother ill?" Sally said, fottin Sam a welt 'at made him study asthronomy. "Goo an' ston i'th' nook whol aw tell thee to come eaut."

Sam were capped eaut ov his wits at that, for it upset o 'at experience had larn't him, an' slutther't off as iv a boggart were at his heels, whol Sally crossed o'er an' went into Simpson's for th' first time in her life. Th' tailor sit o in his dirt rockin afore a fire brunt deawn to t' last cindher; th' ash-hole chawked up wi dirt, floor an' woles in a bonny mess, an' hardly a stick o' furnithur i'th' hole.

"Is yor missis ill, Simpson?"

"Hoo reckons so," th' tailor grunted, heighvin his yead up an' showin a scraggy length o' bare neck wi a dirty yollow shirt flappin oppen reaund it.

"Are yo doin nowt for her?"

"What con aw do? There's nowt i' th' heause for nobry. Some folk con olez have o they wanten, but aw were ne'er lucky enough for that. Hoo mun help hersel."

He looked very unconsarn't abeaut it, as iv it matther't nowt mich heaw things went.

"Are yo noane wortchin?"

"Aw've getten bagged."

"Stir abeaut afther another job then, yo idle slotch!" were on th' end o' Sally's tongue, but hoo nobbut said, "Well, Simpson, iv yo con do nowt aw mun thry to shap summat mysel. Mun aw goo up to her?"

"Plez yorsel," th' tailor said, an' deawn went his yead again. Sally pushed her road through tuthri dirty, squabblin childher, makin din enough to dyeafen her, an' climbed th' stairs, hutchin in her clooas an' howdin her skirts weel up eaut o' th' dirt. Th' ailin woman lee gaspin for wynt on a stinkin sthraw bed, tuthri rags thrown o'er her for coverin. Things were dirtier upstairs nor deawn, iv that could be, an' Sally thought to hersel, "Talk abeaut bugs! They could breed foumarts here."

"What done yo want?" Mrs. Simpson axed wi a crammed stare.

"Come, come!" Sally said; "we'll fo noane eaut to-day, as heaw 't be. What's wrong wi yo?"

"Eh! aw'm some ill; aw am that," Simpson whin't. "Mi inside feels o ov a fire, an' aw'm full o wartches fro yead to foot. Aw s' ne'er mend."

"Yo're noane weel, that's a sure thing," Sally towd her. "We mun have a docthor on this job, an' aw'll shap to side up a bit for yo. A cup o' linseed tay 'd do yo no harm, an' aw'll stop yon childher's meauths wi a butthercake. What's yon chap o' yors doin beaut wark?"

Foumarts, polecats.

"He wants no wark, not he! Let him sit skollokin reaund doin nowt an' he's reet. Aw met dee afore he'd stir a finger. Eh, aw'm some ill?"

"Yo'd do wi some moore clooas on th' bed," Sally says, thryin to lap her up warmer. "Good mercy, woman! done yo co this thing a shift?"

"It's o aw've getten," Simpson said, very sulky.

"Aw'll fot yo one o' mine, then; this is noane fit for map-rags. Is it breawntitus yo'n getten or inflameation?"

"Aw know naught what it is, but aw'm some ill. Aw am that! An' yon childher makin din enough to dyeafen a twod, an' their fayther too idle to stir a limb. He cares nowt whether aw'm wick or dyead!"

"Yo're weel matched," Sally thought, as hoo went deawn th' stairs, but hoo wouldn't ha towd em so for th' world just then. Hoo sent for a docthor, geet some linseed an' broth made, persuaded Simpson to get weshed an' goo axin for his shop back again; an' then, gettin a neighbour to help, had a gradely set-to wi soft swop an' scrubbin brushes, makin th' heause as clen as a pin afore neet.

When Mrs. Simpson geet eaut o' bed again hoo fund things so thrim an' dacent hoo were fair capped, an' swore hoo'd ne'er fund sich a friend in her life. Simpson kept steady, too, for awhile, a bit freeten't wi th' close shave they'd had, an' ne'er geet weary o' praisin Sally. But folk are nobbut mortal, yo known, when o's said; an' afore so very long Sally an' th' tailor's wife were fratchin as hard as ever, Simpson dhroppin back into his owd idle habits. Pity? Oh, ah! but it's thrue, an' iv folk wain't help theirsel a bit what are yo beaun to do wi 'em?

Aw darsay it made Simpson wife wur mad nor hoo would ha bin to see Amos an' his family gettin on so weel. They'n ne'er done nowt but prosper, an' there's brass enough i' th' store an' t' bank neaw to keep th' owd folk as long as they liven, iv they never done another sthroke.

"Live without work!" James Henry laughed when aw let on him tuthri week sin' an' towd him th' owd folk should gate takkin life yezzier. "My father and mother will never stop working while they can see or stand, you may be sure of that. I proposed the other day that they should both come to live in my big house at Oldham, where they would find everything ready to their hands, and have a chance of enjoying themselves, but bless you! they won't hear of it. 'We s' be chawked plenty soon enough i' Rachda,' my mother said. 'This is noane mich ov a teawn, but we con lick Owdham, shuzheaw.'"

"They'll flit noane fro Rachda, not they!" aw said, grinnin at

Chawked, choked.

him. "Tha met ha known that. Ha'ever, aw'm fain to find tha'rt willin to help an' plez th' owd folk a bit."

"They'n done enough for me, hannot they?" he co'd eaut, dhroppin into dialect, as o Lancashire chaps are olez ready to do, shuz heaw mony sorts o' talk they'n larn't. "Aw should be a poor wasthrel iv aw wouldn't wortch mi fingers to th' bwon for sich a mother an' fayther as mine. Done yo think us lads could e'er ha getten on as we han done but for t' bringin up an' careful watchin we geet afore we'd larn't wit?"

"Happen yo wouldn't," aw said. "But arta sure tha'rt noane a little bit preaud neawadays, wi thi silk hat an' Exchange ticket, an' o th' management o' yon hundherd-theausan-spindle facthry i' thi honds?"

"Proud? Of course I am," he says, fo'in up t' steps into English again. "I have a right to be proud of an honourable position, gained by honest perseverance. "To tell you a profound secret, though, my mother has a lot more pride in her than I have."

"Aw darsay tha'rt reet, lad," aw said, laughin. "An' what's this aw yer abeaut yor Ephraim? He's turnin eaut a greight singer they say'n."

"Oh yes! The peculiar twang of sulphur in his voice makes him just the man to play villains in Italian opera. Yes, Eph gets on very well. We have another distinguished musician, too. Samuel Robert has grown into a famous solo cornet player, and teaches more brass bands than I can count. The old house is emptying fast."

"There'll be one less, shuzheaw, when Betty weds th' ceauncillor's son. Yo'll o be gwone dhirectly obbut th' young uns. Oh! aw've yerd nowt o' yor Amos latly. What abeaut him?"

"He is sketching somewhere towards Preston. Nothing but Lancashire scenery will do for Amos, you know, and nobody paints our towns and hills like he does. He finds beauties everywhere."

"He's sense to use what lies undher his hond," aw said, "an' that's what makes his wark so nathural an' dhrives it wom to th' heart. He con show a bare moorside spread wi a theausan shades o' leet an' dark, an' make Hollinoth as grand as Windhermere itsel. Tha remembers that fine piece o' wark where he's daubed Whitehowm lodge onto a yard o' cloth, wi t' pile o' shuttherin rocks, an' owd Blacksnedge teawerin up behinnd, like Meaunt Blank or some o' them; dashed wi snow ridges, green wi moss, dark wi wither't yeth, black wi turf bogs; sweepin reaund bi wheere th' Roch springs send up their first tayspoonful o' wayther, dhribblin deawn toard th' soot an' slutch i' th' valley. Ah! he paints wi his yead, yor Amos does, an' onybody con tell he's bin o his life among t' things an' folk he dhraws."

"Yes, that picture helped to make him famous. I like his bits of human nature best myself; such pieces as his 'Old Factory Hand.' Did you see that?"

"Nowe, aw think not. Aw've sin a tuthri wick uns, tha knows."

"This is an old man, sitting in a ricketty wooden arm-chair by his fireside. He is thin, pale, with swollen blue veins on his hands, and deep lines worn into his face by work and trouble. He has a patient, rather sad look, and is drawn to the life from straggling grey hairs to shabby fustian and clogs. There is little furniture, and that of the plainest sort—two or three rush-bottomed chairs, far worn, and a round table holding a loaf, cup and saucer. A six-inch square looking-glass is all that hangs on the walls, which are as bare of paper as the stone floor is of carpet. At one end of the mantelpiece is a large framed mount of memorial cards, recording the burials of his wife and children; at the other end is an engrossed address, a presentation to the old man from his fellow-workmen, 'as a token of good will and esteem;' and the shelf also holds a short clay pipe, some tin canisters, and a broken toy horse. A string hangs over the gas bracket, to carry the breakfast can seen on the slopstone, when its contents want heating; a broken comb lies on the window-bottom, the old man's cap and knitted scarf are thrown carelessly upon a chair, and prints of his clog-irons show on the well-sanded floor. You can't help feeling sorrow for the poor solitary chap, and regard for the artist who could produce so pathetic and real a composition from such simple materials."

"Give o'er, lad," aw said, wipin mi foolish owd e'en. "Aw couldn't look at that picther beaut yeawlin like a babby, an' thinkin o' th' warkheause. Haven't aw sin a score o' sich kitchens! It's thrue, every hawpoth on't, an' that's th' very finest point picthers con have. Tell Amos to keep on i' th' same road, an' he'll do, shuz heaw mony ov his thrade are busy wi croo't-necked goddesses, flyin dogs, an' sich like, fro th' mythology. Yor John Tommy's makin a dyel o' brass, too, isn't he?"

"He gets five hundred a year as chemist in a soap making concern, to say nothing of his patents."

"*He* should be o reet then. So yo're like o wed an' sattl't i' life; doin weel, gettin on, an' enjoyin yorsel among it. Yo couldn't be doin betther 'at aw know on."

James Henry wagged his yead. "As for enjoyment I am not so sure. Business is a grinding thing." He bent deawn, whisperin i' mi ear: "Don't tell onybody, but mony a time on th' Exchange aw just feel 'at aw should like to bowt off an' have a good reaund at thrinnel or duckstone. Thoose were grand owd times!"

"Tha'd look weel playin duckstone in a top hat," aw said.

"There's th' same owd yead inside it, "he says, pooin his hat

off to tap his creawn wi his knockles. "Aw keep gettin fresh stuff inside t' yead, but there'll olez be a nook kept for th' owd days an' th' owd folk."

"Hear, hear!" aw said. "Stick to that an' tha'll ne'er ail mich. Aw'll co an' see thi fayther an' mother; aw'm just gooin deawn that road on."

"Do!" he says. "Do!" An off he splutther't toard th' railway station.

So aw co'd in at th' owd heause for tuthri minutes. There were nobbut th' owd folk awom. Amos sit wi his pipe at th' hob-end, as usal; Sally were stirrin abeaut, puttin clen, new-iron't clooas away i' t' dhrawers undher her cubbort, ready for Sunday. There were a thick, sweet, damp sort ov a smell i' th' kitchen, 'at made me sniff.

"Come, what arta snighin thi nose at?" Sally axed, laughin whol dimples showed in her reaunt rosy cheeks, an' th' breet artificial fleawers in her cap nodded again.

"Aw've smelt summat like that afore," aw said, sniffin yet. "It's noather ceaw juice nor nettle tay, that isn't."

"Ceawer thee deawn whol aw fot thee a saup," says Amos wi a chuckle. "It's as grand wom-brewed as e'er touched a galker."

He brought a potful wi a rare top on, so weel brewed 'at it tasted like melted tharcake an' slipped deawn like weet chicken fithers.

"Ah-h-h-h!" aw said, gettin mi wynt afther a long dhreight; "tha's noane forgetten heaw to mend rain-waythers yet, Sally, aw see. Iv owt could make mi yure curl this would."

Sally nobbut laughed, smoothin back her toppin o' one side, a bit ov a thrick hoo'd had fro bein a lass.

"Aw've just met yor James Henry. He's as mich set on him as a lord, very near, sin' he gated gafferin at Stony Brook."

"He's reet enough," Amos says. "He's a fine lad, is eaur Jimmy. He'll ne'er be freeten't o' bucklin to when there's ony wark stirrin."

"Aw deaubt iv yon wife he's getten looks afther him as hoo should do," Sally said.

Amos winked at me an' axed iv hoo'd ever yerd th' lad grumble.

"Oh nowe! He's a dyel too mich set up wi her to see owt. Hoo's a smart lass enough—aw've nowt to say again her."

"Nobbut yo're his mother an' hoo ne'er will be," aw said. "Yo wouldn't goo a livin wi 'em i' Owdham, it seems?"

"Owdham!" Sally co'd eaut, curlin her nose.

"It's a grand shop. Yo'n missed a chance wi not gooin; to say nowt o' th' hee society yo could ha mixed wi."

Sally stopped her wark an' turn't sayrious. "Young folk are best left to theirsel. Tha'll ne'er catch Amos an' me meddlin wi

eaur childher's business afther they're wed. Aw've sin enough o' that gam, an' don't howd wi it. As for th' hee society, tha knows, it's reet enough for Jim an' t'other lads to meet sichlike, becose they con howd their own bwoth for wit an' larnin. Heaw would it be for us, thinksta? Dost want us to make foos ov eaursel in eaur owd days?"

"Nowe aw don't, Sally. Aw darsay yo're bwoth betther awom when aw come to think; though yo're like to feel a bit lonely as th' heause empties."

Th' husbant an' wife looked at one another wi a smile, an' Amos said in his quiet road: "We'll chance it, Weighver. We'n lived together bi eaursel afore neaw, an' con again. Aw've olez encouraged my lads to get on an' shap for theirsel, tha knows; not like some folk, 'at wanten their childher to stop childish as long as they con shap it. Aw took care to study what eaur young uns were fit for whol they were little, an' to push 'em forrad into their reet cracks, for aw knew too weel what aw'd lost mysel for want o' book-larnin an' a bit o' sensible advice afore aw'd getten sense o' mi own. Ah! it depends a dyel on t' fayther heaw childher turn eaut."

"What abeaut t' mother?" aw said. "Has hoo nowt to do but sew their buttons on an' keep their stockins weshed?"

Amos looked at me a minute, an' then, gettin up, reighched a little book off a shelf i' th' nook. "Hearken to this," he said:

> "'Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.
> The heart of her husband doth salely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.
> She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.
> She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar.
> She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household.
> She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.
> She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.
> She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.
> Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.'"

"Well, that's very nice," aw said, "an' it's plain enough Solomon knew a woman summat like yor Sally; but it's no onswer to th' question aw axed. It doesn't tell us heaw mich a good mother does for her childher."

"Nobry con tell that," says Amos, shuttin his book up. "It's past oather tellin or undherstondin bi sich poor wits as eaurs."

"But it's theere," aw said; "nobry con deny that. What done *yo* think, Sally?"

"Aw think it mun be th' wom-brewed," hoo laughed. "Aw'll put moore wayther in another time."

"Yo'n bin lucky wi yor childher, as heaw 't be," aw said. "They're o gettin on weel; but they'll ne'er be 'sham't on yo shûz heaw hee they getten up."

"Not they," Sally said. "Look here what eaur Amos has sent me. He's bin thinkin ov his owd mother, for one."

Hoo brought me a flat leather case, abeaut six inch bi four, oppen't it, an' showed a picther ov hersel painted on a thin ivory plate. It looked fair wick, an' spoke o' love, beside care an' cliverness i' t' painther. Undher it were written i' smo letthers: "Drawn from his heart, by your affectionate son, Amos Brierley."

"Come, Sally," aw said, "tha con never dee whol this picther's safe. Aw ne'er seed sich a likeness afore! It looks as iv it stirred."

"Aw mun dee some time, an' afore so long too," Sally says in her cheerful way. "Mi wark's welly done neaw; aw've naught mich to do but sit an' watch th' world slurrin past. Aw nobbut hope me an' Amos con finish somebitlike together, for aw don't want to lev him pottherin reaund bi hissel, an' aw s' be fair lost iv he levs me."

"Yer yo!" Amos chuckl't. "We're like two young uns cwortin, aren't we? We s' be sweethearts whol we dee'n, an' noane be suited then iv we cawn't start for th' next world together."

"Ne'er bother yor yeads," aw said; "yo'll meet again hard enough, iv ever onybody does; an' iv aw con shap to squeeze through t' same dur aw s' be weel satisfied."

Well, yo should have some notion abeaut owd Sally's charac-ther neaw; an' let me ax again what's Imogen, or a skipful ov Imogens, at t' side on her? "Sally's a rough un," yo say'n. Well, aw know. "Hoo's ignorant." That depends upo' what yo co'n knowledge. "Hoo's middlin o' temper." Happen so. Are yo beaut? Hoo's bowd, honest, thruthful, unselfish, hard-wortchin, warm-hearted, brode-minded, an' charitable; hoo's teawed through moore nor forty year ov endless scrattin an' never grumbl't; her friends loven her, an' what tuthri enemies hoo has cawn't help respectin her. Tak her otogether hoo's a fair sample o' theausands ov eaur Lancashire women, an' there's no wondher at husbands an' childher—ah! an' gronchildher beside—risin up to bless 'em, carryin i' their hearts lovin memories 'at owd age connot wither, nor th' grave bury.

But it mun be alleawed, afther o's said an' done, 'at Sally wears clogs, an' very oft gets her honds as black as soot wi her heause-wark. Imogen never did so.

BOWD SLASHER.

IT'S a good while sin' aw went a pace-eggin mysel, neaw, but aw'm olez intherested i' t' Good Friday performances o' th' owd play. Who wrote that stirrin thragedy, aw wondher? It's bin honded deawn moore bi word o' meauth nor printin, aw think, as far as Rachda gwoes, shuzheaw; for yo'll have a job to find two books alike, or ony book where it's set deawn same as t' lads play it.

There's good points abeaut t' thing. Every acthor gets summat to do an' say: there's no supers. abeaut, an' nobry maudlin reaund th' stage to put time on. Then, every mon tells his name an' business when he first comes in; a first-rate plan, savin a dyel o' bother an' study for onybody 'at stons hearkenin. There's no women i' t' road, noather, nobbut Dirty Bet, an' hoo doesn't ceaunt; so t' chaps con get forrad wi their wark in a business-like style, an' feight away beaut onybody meddlin wi em. Th' action never stops, for every scene's a feight in it, an' th' excitement keeps grooin whol Bet comes in wi her besom to sweep up for a finish.

An' what grand characthers they are! St. George, crowin o'er everybody, olez winnin his battles, swaggerin o'er what he has done an' what he's beaun to do; th' king ov Egypt an' his son, wi their oriental Smobridge manners; their champion, Hecthor, wi moore talk nor feight in him; t' docthor, full o' long words, lies, an' impidence; th' owd Foo, an' Beelzebub, a bigger foo again; an' above o, Bowd Slasher. That's t' chap! Noane runnin o'er wi empty brag, like St. George, olez ready for his wark, full o' gam, cured ov his weaunds in a twinkle, noane spiteful when he's licked, an' gooin off abeaut his business when he's nowt to do i' th' play. Slasher were olez my favouryte, an' iv aw'd ever bin owt i' th' actin line, that 'd ha bin th' part for me.

He comes on sthrong an' cool,

> "I am a valiant soldier, and Slasher is my name,
> With sword and buckler by my side I hope to win the game."

Then, when St. George threatens to breighk his yead, Slasher says,

> "My head is made of iron,
> And my body's made of steel,
> My hands and feet of knuckle-bone—
> I challenge thee to feel!"

"That speech olez made mi blood run cowd, an' wondher heawever t' chap had bin pieced together, for aw never thought o' deaubtin his word. Then there's a grand deein scene, an' comin

to life again—a rare oppenin for good actin ; an' when t' docthor's brought him reaund he sthretches eaut his glittherin swort, made ov unpolished iron lattin, sets his e'en, an' co's eaut,

> " O hark ! I hear the silver trumpet sound,
> That summons us from off this bloody ground !
> Down yonder is the way ;
> Farewell, St. George, we can no longer stay."

An' away Slasher bowts, comin no moore whol t' last act, when he turns up again to mention 'at his yead's iron, his body steel, an' so on.

Nobbut professional pace-eggers con undherston what labbour an' brain-wark there is abeaut gettin one o' these performances up. Sworts han to be made for a start, for they're mostly oather lost or brokken between one yeär an' t' next. Then there's a dyel o' rehearsals to put in, particlar for St. George an' Slasher, as they'n sich big parts, an' it's no yezzy job neawadays to find a quiet nook to practise in. Mostly t' wark has to be done at a heause-end, or i' t' middle ov a sthreet, where everybody con watch th' show for nowt, makin o th' neighbours grumble. It's common enough for a woman to come runnin to her dur, stop St. George i' one ov his braggin speeches, an' sheaut,

" Na then, theere ! Iv yo aren't o off in a snift aw'll cob a bucket o' wayther on yo ! "

It's laughable to see heaw th' bowd champions 'll slutther off then, wi their sworts undher their arms ; but they seldom getten fur nor t' next gaslamp afore they're at it again.

Aw seed a very good performance in th' oppen market o' Friday mornin ; fit for ony stage. There were a full company o' star artistes, properties an' dhresses on t' usal grand scale (a borrowed skirt, long-brush steighl, an' egg-basket for Dirty Bet ; a hawpoth o' silver nails for St. George's clogs ; rosettes, sashes, an' a yard o' ribbin apiece o reaund), wi th' unpainted market scenery thrown in for nowt. It were a slutchy snowy mornin, but th' performers had shapped to get a dhry spot bi shiftin a stall or two.

St. George wortched i' th' same shade as me, so he coome up to have a word when he seed me lookin.

" Good mornin, Billy," aw said.

" Same to yo, an' mony on 'em," Billy says. " Are yo for stoppin it eaut ? "

" That depends on th' actin," aw towd him. " What mak o' performers are yo ? "

" Good uns ! " Billy said. " Aw want yo to watch us, becose we're thryin a fresh gam on. Aw'm weary o' th' owd road o' sayin this piece—o upo' one keigh, same as a clockin hen or a skrikin pulley—so aw've bin thryin to teighch this lot to put some moore life into it, an' talk nathural like."

" That's a good idea, Billy."

"Yo'll say so when we getten agate. Aw've persuaded th' King ov Egypt an' his son to blacken their faces, too. They'n mostly nowt but a bit o' black ribbin to show 'at they're niggers; but that's noane good enough for us, so we'n gien 'em two cwots o' brunt cork apiece."

"That's reet. Aw didn't know tha were sich a thoughtful stage manager as o that."

"Oh yigh! Iv we're beaun to start actin let's do it reet, that's what aw say. Yo'll see noane o' that marchin across th' ring an' knockin sworts together whol we're talkin, noather. Slasher fot o th' skin off mi knockles t'other neet wi that thrick, so aw stopped it. There's no sense i' that mak."

"Noane at o," aw said. "Come, aw mun see th' play, aw yer."

"Ah, do!" he says, turnin to goo, everybody starin to see me talkin so intimate wi sich a greight champion. "Aw want somebdy to cricketise us a bit. Some o' t' lads is rayther numb, but aw've bin dhrillin 'em upo' Cronkeyshay this three week, so they should do summat."

Aw made one ov a lot o' folk ringed reaund, gettin a full view an' good yerin; steeped in a rich, satisfyin smell fro th' fish shops an' thripe stonnins.

They looked a very breet set o' lads, an' shapped as iv they myent business. Th' King ov Egypt an' his son had faces shinin as iv they'd bin blackleaded. Slasher had a bit ov a cowd in his yead, an' had to keep wipin his sleeve on his nose neaw an' again. Hecthor looked a fine figure ov a sodier, but were a thrifle bow-legged, an' t' Foo beseemed his part up an' deawn. They o geet ready to begin.

BEELZEBUB (*aside* to DIRTY BET).—Aw'm as dhry as soot, Jimmy; howd mi stick whol aw get a bottle o' lemonade up Twod Lone.

DIRTY BET.—Don't be so long, think on. We cawn't sing "Right fol layrol laddy" beaut thee.

BEELZEBUB.—O reet.

ST. GEORGE.—Where arta for, Sam? We're beaun to start.

BEELZEBUB.—Goo on. Aw'll be back i' time.

ST. GEORGE.—Tha'll get no brass iv tha'rt off.

BEELZEBUB.—Gullook! (*Pushes through t' creawd*).

CHAP LOOKIN ON.—Come, lads! Are yo for shappin to-day, or not?

(*Enther* FOO.)

FOO.—Reawm, reawm, brave gallants——

BUTCHER'S LAD (i'th' creawd).—Gallants! He, he!

FOO (*aside*).—Shur up! (*aloud*)—Give us reawm to sport,
For in this spot we myen to howd a court,
An' here repeat to yo eaur merry rhyme,
For remember, good folk, it's Aysther time.

. . . . .

We are the merry acthors what con show yo pleasant play,
So here steps in San George to clear the way.
(*Enther* ST. GEORGE.)

ST. GEORGE.—I am Sant George, who fro owd England sprung,
Mi famous name through o this world hath rung;
Mony a bloody deed an' wondher aw've made known,
An' made th' owd tyrants thremble on their throne.
. . . . . .
A giant nearly sthruck me dyead,
But by mi valyour aw chopped off his yead;
Aw've seeched this here world o reaund an' reaund,
But nobry nowt like me aw never fund.

GENTLEMAN.—Found, my boy, found! You spoil the rhyme.

ST. GEORGE.—Are *yo* playin this, or me?

DIRTY BET.—Hear, hear! Cob thi cap at him.
(*Enther* SLASHER.)

SLASHER (*sleevin his nose*).—Aw am a valyunt sodier, bowd Slasher is mi name,
Wi sword an' buckle bi mi side aw hope to win this game;
For to feight wi me aw see tha'rt noane able,
So wi this here glittherin sword aw'll soon thee disable.

ST. GEORGE.—Disable, saysta! it lies not i' thi peawer,
For wi this glittherin sword an' spear aw soon will thee deveaur;
Stand off, bowd Slasher! let no moore be said,
For if I dhraw mi sword aw'm sure to breighk thi yead.

SLASHER.—Heaw con ta breighk mi yead?
Mi yead's made ov iron,
Mi body's made o' steel,
Mi honds an' feet o' knucklin bwon—
Aw chanellge to make thee feel.

ST. GEORGE (*aside to Slasher*).—Challenge, Joe.

SLASHER.—Shut up, cliverdick! (*Wipes his sleeve.*)
(*Fencin-match*—SLASHER *dhrops*—ST. GEORGE *bowts*—*Enther* FOO).

FOO.—A docthor, a docthor! Ten peaund for a docthor!
(DOCTHOR *steps in*).

DOCTHOR.—Here aw am.

FOO.—Are yo a docthor?

DOCTHOR.—Yes, that yo con plainly see, bi mi art an' activity.

FOO.—Heaw mich to cure this dyead mon?

DOCTHOR.—Ten peaund is mi fee, but iv tha'rt honest aw'll tak five off thee.

FOO (*Aside*).—Tha'll be middlin fawse iv tha gets ony. (*Aloud*) Heaw fur han yo thravell't?

DOCTHOR.—Through Italy, Sickaly, Hee Germany, France, an' Spain; an' so aw've returned to cure owd Englan again.

FOO.—What con yo cure?

DOCTHOR.—Itch, pitch, palsy, an' geaut; or iv a man's nineteen imps in his skull aw con let twenty ov 'em eaut. Here, Jack, have a sup fro my bottle an' let it run deawn thy throttle. Iv theau be not quite slain, rise, Jack, an' fight again.

SLASHER (*gettin up*).—Oh, mi back! (*Wipes.*)

FOO.—What's to do wi thi back?

SLASHER.—Mi back's weaunded,
An' mi heart's confeaunded;
Aw've bin knocked eaut o' seven wits into seven score;
Nowt like it were ne'er sin i' owd Englan never afore.
(*Enther* ST. GEORGE.)

SLASHER.—Sang George, aw yer yon silver thrumpet seaund!
Deawn yon is the way pointin (*wipes*);
Farewell, Sang George, we con no longer stay.

KING OF EGYPT (*aside to Slasher*).—Tha shouldn't *say* pointin, leatheryead! It myens tha should stick thi finger eaut, so. (*Points toard Know' Hill.*)

SLASHER.—It's deawn i'th' book shuzheaw; so will that do for thee? (*Poo's his book eaut an' finds it for him.*)

KING.—Eh, tha foo!

SLASHER.—Just thee wait whol we'n done!
(*Wipes his nose an' slutthers off wi t'* DOCTHOR *an'* FOO.)

ST. GEORGE.—I am Sant George, that noble champion bowd,
Wi this here good swort I've won ten theausan peaund i' gowd;
(*Crack o' laughin o reaund.*)
'Twere I what fowt the fiery dhragon an' fot him unto slaughther,
An' by them means won th' owd King of Egypt's daughther.
(*Enther* PRINCE PARADINE.)

PRINCE.—I am black Prince Paradine, born ov greight reneawn,
Soon will I fot Sain George's courage deawn.

ST. GEORGE.—Stand off, tha black Morocky dog,
Or bi my sword tha'll die;
I'll piece thi body full ov holes,
An' make o thi buttons fly.

BUTCHER'S LAD.—It met happen cut a bit o' suet iv tha leet it smell at a grindlestone.

PRINCE.—Poo eaut thi sword an' play,
Poo eaut thi brass an' pay;
For aw'm beaun to have a reckoninpence
Afore aw'll goo away!

GENTLEMAN.—Recompense, boy.

PRINCE (*turnin on him wi witherin dignity*).—We cawn't o be schoomaisthers. Aw'll oather wrostle or run thee for eightpence.

(*Cobs his sword deawn an' shaps for boxin.*)

DIRTY BET.—Give o'er, Ben! Behave thisel.

PRINCE (*sulky*).—Aw'm noane com'n here to be talked to bi him. Aw con do mi own clerkin. Who's he?

(*Th' champions feight afther some moore talk, an' th' Prince is kil't.*
Enther KING OF EGYPT.)

KING.—Aw'm th' owd King ov Egypt, as plainly doath appear—

GENTLEMAN.—How so? You look quite as much like the King of Abyssinia, or an Indian fakir.

CHAP NEAR HIM.—He looks moore like a doffer, a lump.

KING.—Lemme a-be! Aw'm th' owd King ov Egypt—

BEELZEBUB (*eautside*).—Here, hutch up! Let's come through, some on yo.

FAT CHAP.—Tha'll come noane through me. Goo reaund, an' stop that shovin, or aw'll lond thee one.

KING.—Make a less din i' that nook! Aw'm th' owd King ov Egypt—

BEELZEBUB.—Reighch mi stick o'er, Jimmy; we'll see whether aw'm comin in or not. (*Pushes his road through.*) That's betther! Ger on wi thi actin, Snowbo.

KING.—Aw'll gie thee Snowbo in abeaut hawve a minute.
Aw'm th' owd King ov Egypt—

PARADINE (*on his back, dyead*).—Heaw mony times yet? Ger on wi thee?

KING.—Well, what done they keep agate on me for?
Aw've com'n a seechin mi long-lost son an' heir.

ST. GEORGE.—He's kil't.

KING.—Who did him slay, who did him kill,
An' on this greaund his precious blood did spill?

ST. GEORGE.—I did him slay, etc.

KING.—Oh, Hecthor! Hecthor! help me wi speed,
I' o mi life aw ne'er stood moore i' need.

(*Enther* HECTHOR.)

HECTHOR.—Yes, yes, mi lige, aw will obey,
An' wi this here swort hope to win the day;
Iv this is him stonnin theere
'At kil't yor long-lost son an' heer,
Whether he's sprung fro ryal flood,
Aw'll make him run like Noah's blood,

ST. GEORGE.—Bowd Hecthor! dunnot be so wot,
For here tha knows naught who tha's got;
I'll inch thee, an' cut smo as flies,
Send thee o'er th' say to make mince pies—

Mince pies wot an' mince pies cowd,
I'll send thee to Black Sam afore tha'rt three days owd!

HECTHOR.—Heaw con tha inch me, cut me smo as flies,
Send me o'er th' say, etc.

(*Enther* SLASHER, *nosin his sleeve.*)

SLASHER.—Howd, Sang George! Stay thi valyour bowd!
Mi yead's made ov iron,
Mi body's made o' steel,
Mi honds an' feet o' knucklin-bwon—
Aw chanellge to make thee feel!

TH' OWD WEIGHVER (*just behinnd him*).—It's challenge, Joe. Tha's bin towd afore.

SLASHER (*turnin an' wipin*).—Yo'n naught to do wi it, as aw know on.

HECTHOR (*to* PARADINE).—Tha'rt lyin fair i' t' road, Paregoric; we'n no reawm to feight. Rowl o'er once.

(PARADINE *rowls*—ST. GEORGE *an'* HECTHOR *set to.*)

HECTHOR.—Howd on a bit! Tha's knocked mi sword croot.

BUTCHER'S LAD.—It'll match thi legs then. Tha'll ne'er be weaunded i' bwoth knees at once.

ANOTHER LAD.—He wain't that! They'll ha no need to buy callipers where that mon wortches.

HECTHOR.—Somebry's beaun to get punced afore so long!

BUTCHER'S LAD.—Ah! tha'll do some puncin wi thoose feet. Heighve one leg up an' tha'll wort o'er on t'other.

HECTHOR (*gettin mad*).—Aw'll talk to thee fur on, slink beef! Tha'rt noane woth stewin.

(*Sthraightens his sword, gets it knocked croot again, an' worts o'er weaunded.*)

HECTHOR.—Aw'm a bowd an' valyunt knight, Hecthor is mi name,
Mony a bloody battle aw've fowt an' olez won the same;
Fro Sank George's hond aw geet this here bloody weaund—
Howd on! Aw yer yon silver thrumpet seaund—

CHAP I' TH' CREAWD.—Tha lies, too.

HECTHOR.—Deawn yon is the way (*pointin west wi his arm, an' northerly wi his croot sword*),
Farewell, Sank George! aw connot longer stay.

CHAP.—Nobry wants thee to do. Tha shaps some wooden!

HECTHOR.—Oh ah! Heaw con a chap act wi o this here gam gooin on? Tha wouldn't like it thysel, aw'll bet!

BEELZEBUB.—Here steps in owd Beelzebub,
An' o'er mi shooldher aw carry a club,
An' in one hond a fryin pon,
An' aw think mysel a jolly owd mon.
Right fol layrol, etc.

Then, as Dirty Bet (ornamented wi four finger marks o' one cheek an' a sooty sthripe fro chin-end to foryead) were settin up a dismal yeawl reckon't to be singin, aw thought it hee time to be shappin for off. Aw left St. George swaggerin reaund wur consaited nor ever, Paradine's corpse sittin up on th' battle fielt talkin to th' owd king, an' bowd Slasher stonnin near dhrawin his sleeve across his nose.

T'OTHER SIDE RIO.

I.—Levin Wom.

WHEN, as a lad at th' neet schoo, aw used to look at th' Merica map—t' seauth end like a big o'ergroon ham, an' t' north thryin hard, wi bwoth arms sthretched, to balance itsel on th' middle bit, but wortin to one side—aw ne'er expected seein moore o' that counthry nor paint an' papper could show me.

Iv onybody had said to me when aw were made gaffer o'er th' cardreawm an geet wed at one-an'-twenty, "Lijah, i' ten year fro neaw tha'll be crossin th' say, turnin thi back on owd Englan, on wife, childher, kin, an' o thi heart howds best i' th' world," aw should ha laughed him to scorn, or else punced him for thryin to plague me.

"What!" aw should ha thought to mysel, though aw metn't ha whisper't it to ony mortal beside; "lev mi wife—that dear lass so deep loved, so hee set i' mi thoughts—lev little helpless childher 'at God may send us to rear an' shape into good chaps and women—oh nowe! it con ne'er be so! It's noane possible."

An' yet that sthrange thing coome abeaut, an' through no lessenin o' love, noather; for love itsel sent me across th' brode Atlantic, to toil an' suffer, an' fret through mony a lonely month, for th' good o' that very wife an' thoose pratty blossoms 'at were so groon an' twin't abeaut mi heart.

For, done yo see, bi th' time aw reighched thirty year owd, an' were fayther to two lads an' a lass, aw were forced to start reckonin up heaw far mi wage were likely to ratch eaut toard makin th' young uns comfortable, an' teighchin 'em o aw thought they should larn; an' aw were bund to sattle 'at aw could do very little. It's a bitther thing for a fayther an' mother to see their childher grooin up beaut larnin, o for want o' tuthri bits o' dirty silver or grasy papper-lumps; me an' Alice felt hurt aboon a bit becose we could see no road oppen o' helpin 'em, but o th' comfort we could find were 'at plenty moore folk were i' th' same boat.

Neaw, one Sethurday t' young maisther sent for me into his private office; an' when aw geet theere he axed me to sit deawn, for he's a gradely gentleman as ever stood i' shoe leather, thinkin hissel no betther nor ony on us.

"How are you getting along, Garside?" he axed me. "And how is your family?"

Aw towd him we were o reet enough, so then he said he'd noticed me lookin rayther deawn latly, as iv aw'd some throuble on mi mind; so aw eaut wi it, tellin him heaw t' thoughts o' mi childher were botherin me, an' heaw aw craved for some road o' doin betther for 'em, but were beginnin to think they mut live an' dee beaut ever gettin a chance o' larnin moore wit nor their fayther had done afore 'em.

"I will help you to educate them," he says.

"Nay, nay," aw towd him. "It's wi no thought o' beggin i' mi yead 'at aw've towd yo o this. Yo munnot offer me charity; t' childher mun tak their chance o' what aw con addle for 'em."

He laughed an' said, "Wait till I offer you something before getting your back up like that. Who can do any good with such an independent fellow?" If you won't beg for the children you are willing to work for them, I suppose?"

"Wi o mi heart," aw said; "but there's moore wark nor brass abeaut cardin."

"I can give you a place at six pounds a week, if you choose to take it. Say three hundred pounds a year. In two years you could save nearly four hundred pounds; a sum quite enough not only to educate your children, but to leave a comfortable balance for you to fall back upon at any time when health or employment fail you."

Aw could do nowt but gawp at him an' mutther, "Six peaund a week! Six peaund a week!" for a while. Then aw said, "Yo're oather makin gam on me, or yo wanten to start smugglin. There isn't a cardher i' Englan could make o that brass."

"I said nothing of England."

Aw began to see what he were dhrivin at, an' axed, "Wheere is it then?"

"A village in Brazil," he says; "near Rio de Janeiro."

Mi jaw dhropped. Aw couldn't speighk for a bit.

"That seems to fluster you," t' young maisther went on, smilin. "Don't think too seriously of the difficulties. The distance is only three thousand miles or so; your passage money shall be paid; you shall have a contract for two years. The thing is simple enough."

"Is it?" aw said. "Maisther Frank, yo're a husban an' a fayther same as me; would *yo* like to lev yor wife an' childher to feight th' world bi theirsel two whol year, riskin yor life on th' say an' among yollow fayver, an' sichlike? Aw'd sooner breighk stones i' owd Englan nor riddle gowd fro Merica slutch. Aw con goo noane—don't ax me."

"I must ask you," he says, clearin his throat, as iv he'd a lump in it. "You are just the man we want. The mill is a new one, hardly built yet, so you would have everything to set up and get

into working order. The machinery goes from the town here, and by the time it gets over the mountains to the mill it will be smashed up, I expect. A mechanic is sailing in about a month, so you can go with him if you accept."

Aw could do nowt but shake mi yead, noane seein mi road at o; an' yet, o that brass——

"Aw con sattle nowt neaw," aw towd him. "Mi wife mun know. Hoo'd never let me goo iv aw wanted."

"I suppose not," Misther Frank said, watchin me very close wi his sharp breet e'en. "For all that three hundred a year should be worth trying for, and I tell you plainly you are the very best man I can recommend for the job. Find me another overlooker with your knowledge of spinning and weaving, and of as reliable a character, and he shall go instead of you."

Aw couldn't help feelin preaud to yer mysel praised to that height bi a chap 'at olez said what he myent; so aw thanked him for his good opinion, sayin he were happen expectin moore nor aw could do.

"Not at all," he says. "I know your capacity well enough. It is not my habit to pay idle compliments, as you are quite aware, no doubt. Naturally I should not send an incompetent workman to such an important post; besides, these people are willing enough to pay a good price, and I want them to be well served. Think the matter over, consult your wife and friends, and let me know your decision in a week."

Aw thanked him again, an' slutther't off wi mi yead whuzzin like a hummin-top, but through mi maziness one sthrong point began getherin weight an' size—like or not like it were mi duty to put selfish feelins o' one side, an' fot this gowd waitin ready for me. Afther t' first shock mi wife thought t' same, so th' job were as good as sattl't.

So i' tuthri days aw gav mi word to goo; t' conthract were sign't, th' sailin day fixed, clooas an' oddments bought an' packed up, an' Time went flyin on as iv somebry were afther him wi a cart-whip. Eh, thoose last short days, afore we were to part! We o thried to be cheerful, an' shapped to keep a middlin breet eautside, though two hearts were bleedin. Aw kept mi wife an' childher as mich i' seet as aw could, an' took care to get o their likenesses takken to carry wi me o'er th' say, levin mi own to be framed an' hanged up i' th' kitchen; an' so we thrail't on to th' last pitiful heaurs between me an' shipboard.

Th' mechanic they were sendin eaut wi me co'd to see us once or twice. His name were Squire Marcroft, an' we framed like gettin on very weel together. A big peawerful chap he were, wi muscles as big as prize turmits, grizzl't yure, a red nose, an' a glint o' fun in his e'en. He were a dozen year owdher nor me, wi no childher to bother him, so he thought a dyel less o' t' thrip nor aw

did, nobbut makin gam on me iv aw started o'er mi throubles, an' talkin as iv we'd nowt afloat o' moore consequence nor hawve a day at Hollinoth. Beside, he were nobbut wanted for a twelvemonth, so he'd get back again long afore aw could. He cheer't mi wife up rarely whenever he coome, an' put us o i' betther sperrits. He'd be just reet company for me, that were plain, an' stop me fro gettin too thoughtsome an' mopish, as aw'm apt to do when left to mysel, so aw felt rare an' thankful to have sich a lively neighbourly chap to share mi thravels.

At last t' dhreaded mornin coome when we'd to start for Liverpool. Aw left mi childher awom, wi sich good advice as aw could think on, takkin mi wife in a cab to th' station. Theere on th' platform aw took her i' mi arms once moore, kissin her weet cheek an' quiverin lips wi love as deep an' sthrong as when aw wed her, an' then o were o'er. We'd ridden a good way afore aw felt like mysel again. Squire an' me had th' carriage to eaursel, an' he'd kept quiet so as not to bother me, smookin an' watchin t' counthry as it flew past.

"We're fairly in for it neaw, Squire," aw said, when aw geet sattl't again.

"Ah, we're booked," he says, puttin one leg up on th' shet an' fittin hissel into his nook, lookin as comfortable as could be. "We're like takkin a rise eaut o' th' leoparts neaw."

"Heaw's that?"

"Changin spots, cawn't te see! Cheer up, owd breek! we s' get o'er it, an' happen be as bad again."

"Aw seed nowt o' thi wife at th' station, Squire," aw said, bein fur enough mended to tak a bit ov intherist i' somebry else's affairs.

"Nor me noather," he says, very dhry, fillin his pipe again.

"Heaw were that?"

"Well, two on us met ha cost a shillin for a cab, dost see; but comin bi mysel aw could walk up wi th' hondcart. We mun save brass wi o these fares to pay."

"Ger off wi thi nonsense!"

"Tha's no need to think o wed folk are sugar an' spice an' owt 'at's nice, same as thee an' thi missis. My wife's a slat ov aliker, or weshin liquor, or summat, in her, an' ne'er gushes o'er her husban mich. Aw'll tell thee what! Iv aw'd offer't to clip her up afore folk on' th' platform, same as tha did yor Ailse, hoo'd ha sauced me to t' dyeath."

We geet to Liverpool beaut mishaps, an' afore neet were slippin deawn th' Channel toard oppen wayther. Squire reckon't he hadn't made his mind up fairly whether to goo or not, as soon as we geet nicely afloat, an' axed iv there were ony road back.

Shet, seat.

"Tha'd betther ax th' captain," aw said; so off he went, as cool as kest iron, to th' gowd-laced officer, stonnin wi some moore swells on' th' bridge.

"Neaw, captain!" he co'd eaut, lookin up an' takkin his clay pipe eaut ov his meauth a minute. "Neaw!"

Th' captain looked deawn o'er th' rail at him, an' axed,

"What's the matter, my friend?"

"Aw'm wondherin whether to turn back or not," Squire went on. "Is there ony road eaut?"

"I'm afraid not," th' captain says laughin, "unless we lash you to a rocket line and shoot you back."

"Cawn't yo stop a bit, an' send me in a boat? Or turn reaund again—it's noane so fur?"

"It is my painful duty to refuse," th' captain towd him, helpin th' joke on wi ready humour. "You are not afraid of the water, are you?"

"That's just wheere aw'm fast," Squire said, solid as a box. "Aw cawn't sattle that puzzle whol we getten past tuthri o' these sondbonks. Which is yor next co'in shop?"

"Bordeaux, probably. Perhaps you had better go on so far, rather than delay the mails and the whole ship's company by returning to Liverpool. What do you think?"

"Aw darsay yo're reet. Well, thank yo, captain. What'll yo have a gill ov ale on?"

"Nothing at present, thank you," th' captain says, shakin his lusty sides an' gooin back to his wark, whol Squire walked off as iv nowt were.

That joke lasted th' passengers o t' thrip. Every time we stopped some on 'em 'd say, "I'll be getting back now, captain—kindly order my luggage up;" or, "I'll get off at the next calling shop;" or summat o' that mak; but never a smile could they fot on Squire's dhry face.

He played moore nor one marlock o' th' same mak afore we'd getten through th' first day, whol aw began thinkin he were carryin on to smother his feelins an' keep his full heart fro runnin o'er. Aw felt sure on't at bedtime, when he sit him deawn wi his yead in his honds for a good while beaut stirrin.

"Tha'rt feelin it, owd mon," aw said, puttin a hond on his shooldher. "Tha's sthriven hard again it, but it's no use."

"Aw'll tell thee what, Lijah," he says; "aw should just like to conthract wi th' owd woman to come an' gie me a week's saucin. Aw'd pay her time an' quather for it. What the hangment is there abeaut yon say-rocked cradle ov a island 'at makes it so hard to get eaut on?"

We geet doffed, climbed up onto th' panthry shelves where they expected us to sleep, an' shapped to sattle deawn as weel as we could whol mornin.

"Good neet, Lijah," Squire said, puttin his greight hond up to grip mine. "God bless o th' folk i' owd Englan this neet, particlar Rachda folk, an' speshly two little cottage-full 'at we known on. God bless 'em o, chaps, women, young childher, an' facthry folk; an' may they never be forced to lev a good wom to goo brass-huntin, same as two foos 'at could be mention't."

"Amen, Squire!" aw said. "Amen!"

II.—Shipboard.

We were up soon next mornin, as stiff i' limbs an' back as iv we'd bin weel punced, an' feelin rayther qualmish; heawever, hawve-an-heaur i' th' fresh sauty air an' a good breakfast set us abeaut reet again. Squire had wakken't up quite cheerful an' breet. He went reaund among th' passengers, gettin thick wi 'em dhirectly, crackin jokes, playin his thricks, an' makin hissel quite awom. Th' captain coome up laughin to shake honds wi him. "How are you this morning, my friend? Any more settled?"

"Aw am that!" Squire says. "Yo'll sattle me otogether afore long iv aw'm to sleep in a packin case every neet. It nobbut wants t'other side boardin up to make a tidy coffin."

"You are not much of a sailor, I'm afraid."

"Nowe! Aw'd sooner have mi saut dhry, an' mi wayther bi th' bucketful. There's too mich weet here o to be hanged! It's hee time they ran a railroad across, or else tunnell't undher it."

"You are going to ruin my profession," th' captain laughed, an' away he went.

Aw were fain to see Squire enjoyin hissel, makin so free wi 'em o, an' yet never sayin or doin owt to hurt or insult onybody, an' liked to watch his tall monly figure stirrin abeaut th' ship; but for mysel, it were my road to sit quiet, sayin little beaut aw were spokken to—takkin o in an' lettin nowt eaut, as mi mate said.

We were second-class passengers. There were six on us to start wi—four Englishmen, a Swiss, an' a German—an' we geet on together very weel. We nobbut carried two or three first-class folk, an' they ne'er bother't us. Th' steerage were middlin full, but we ne'er bother't *them*—there were too mony rough customers, an' too sthrong a flavvour o' sweaty feet.

We geet a sample o' rowlin i' th' Bay o' Biscay, an' a touch o' say-sickness beside, but slurred on o reet as fur as t' Garonne meauth, wheere a fog kept us fast four-an'-twenty heaurs. When we started up th' river, slap we went onto a big sondbonk, an' had to lie eaut another neet whol they geet a tug-boat up to rive us off.

We geet to Bordeaux on Sunday mornin, December seventeenth, eighteen hundherd an' eighty-two; took in moore passengers an' cargo, an' afore bedtime sailed for Spain.

"This is where Rachda pigeon-flyers send their homin brids to," Squire said, as we leighn't o'er th' ship side watchin t' vine-counthry slip past i' th' darkenin neet. "Iv we'd one here big enough to carry me aw should be tempted to chet back."

"Give o'er frettin, mon," aw towd him. "We're fairly off, neaw, cardin-engine i' one hond, screw-keigh i' t'other; duty lies afore us, an' mun be done wi a mon's will. We're sent eaut to do credit to Rachda, an' we'll do it too! There's some grand, weel-wooded hills abeaut here. It's a fine counthry."

"Aw've sin nowt hawve as nice as th' Sachary broo yet," Squire grunted, "an' it'll tak a middlin good nathural curiosity to lick th' owd church steps. There's nowt i' France woth a sham bodle."

We poo'd up next i' Corunna Bay, an' geet some letthers off wom. Heaw aw tem'd o mi love an' hope into four little pages o' papper aw'll lev yo to guess; but yo couldn't guess heaw aw kissed an' cried o'er that letther afore it went, an' heaw partin wi it were like pooin a limb off.

Squire were noane for writin, he reckon't; he'd started keepin a diary, so his wife could read it o at once when he londed back; but aw geet him persuaded to send a line or two, an' he scrawl't this off:

"Corunna, Spenish Juice Lond,
Four days off Kesmas.

Dear Wife,

We'n getten so fur, an' we'n a dyel fur to goo yet. Mi bacca's lasted eaut, but aw reckon nowt o' this whistle-throttle Spenish wine—a gill ov owd Foother ale's woth a barrel on it. Here's hopin tha keeps weel as this levs me at present. So no moore fro thi lovin husban,

SQUIRE MARCROFT."

"Theere!" he says. "That's mi first love-letther, Lijah. Th' owd woman 'll get it fram't, see iv hoo doesn't."

We took a lot moore steerage passengers aboard here, Spenish mostly; hawve weshed, olez smookin cigarettes, singin or dancin, or doin o three at once, but takkin very particlar notice ov a priest 'at gaffer't o'er 'em. That job ended we up anchor, an' away reaund Cape Finisterre to Lisbon, where we stopped for a neet, sleepin on dhry lond again for once. We walked up an' deawn a bit, takkin stock o' th' square stone heauses, endless gardens, dirty sthreets, an' sallow folk seaukin their everlastin papper cigars. We went to th' circus, too, an' seed some bicycle performers 'at Squire said he'd sin at owd Jeffrey's Music Hall once.

We stopped at Sneyd's Hotel, lookin eaut o'er th' wide bay, an' next mornin felt summat like havin bin to bed, th' first time for above a week. We sailed off wi a shipful this time—hawve-a-dozen first-class, nearly twenty second, an' a hundherd an' fifty odd third. Most o' these were French an' Portigee, an' Howden's marionettes were nowt to 'em for knockin their legs an' arms

abeaut. As for chattherin, their tongues were never quiet. They seemed o very friendly an' good-temper't wi one another. Iv a couple had a fratch it were nobbut like childher han—five minutes' passion, other five i' th' sulks, an' then kiss an' be friends again.

"It's done us good to get upo' dhry lond an heaur or two," Squire said to me as we sail't fro th' port, "but aw've had abeaut enough o' this shop. Were it co'd Licebon once, an then shorten't, dost think?"

"There's no tellin. Aw should think thoose things wouldn't tarry where there's earthquakes."

"Well, happen they wouldn't; but aw'll be hanged iv earthquakes ud make some o' these folk wesh theirsel. There's some difference between these yollow skins an' a gradely wholsom Whitoth breawnback!"

"As fur as aw con judge these are th' folk tha'll ha to live among this next year," aw said; "so tha'd betther be gettin used to 'em."

"Why, aw thought we were mony a hundherd mile off yet!"

"We are, but it's Portigee lond we're makin for, aw expect. Hast ever yerd o' Vasco di Gama?"

"What mak ov a gam?"

"A chap 'at sailed fro here; summat i' th' Columbus an' Captain Cook line. Tha may look to find thisel among plenty o' Spenish an' Portigee chaps at thi new shop."

"Aw s' get o'er it, happen, iv aw haven't to sleep wi 'em. They'n sense enough to shap summat t'eight, as heaw 'tis, for they'n just slung ten bullocks an' a lot o' sheep in, beside ducks an' geslins. We're noane beaun to be clemmed this thrip."

Kesmas Day fund us off Teneriffe. We didn't tarry theere, but managed to find time, whol gooin forrad, for a rare good dinner, joinin th' first-class folk for once. Th' captain were ill, an' axed Squire to tak his cheer at th' table yead, but th' mischievous reskil would shove me in for that job, sayin' aw were th' best-lookin chap i' th' ship. At neet th' officers leet tuthri fireworks off, an' so th' quarest Kesmas ever aw spent coome to it end.

Two days afther we reighched th' Cape de Verd islands, an' poo'd up at St. Vincent to fill th' coal boxes; a dirty, sweaty job, 'at took eight heaurs to knock off. It were neetfo when we anchored, so there were nowt done whol mornin. As soon as day broke a lot o' little boats put off fro lond, full o' chaps an' lads. They coome bangin up ropes onto th' deck like a swarm o' midges, an' comical lookin customers they were. There were white, black, an' brokken-yur't uns among 'em, but it were hard to say which had th' most vanity an' impidence. Plenty on 'em were big, fine-limbed fellahs, an' their clooas showed their figures off rarely.

Brokken-yur't, cross-bred.

Most on 'em wore nowt but a ragg'd shirt, though one or two dandies sported sthraw hats beside, an' one young lad had nowt i' th' world on but a dirty papper collar, festen't wi a twig, an' one footless stockin.

Squire shoved among 'em, brastin wi laughin.

"It's hee time we coome here a weighvin," he co'd eaut, catchin one on 'em bi his tatther't shirt-sleeve; "cotton's as scace i' this hole as thripe on a Wednesday."

One on 'em stalked forrad wi as mich set on him as a duke's butler, hondin eaut a card.

"What neaw?" says Squire, lookin at it. "Some aleheause advertizement, is it? Why, tha's getten somebry to spell it eaut i' English for thee!"

He passed th' card on to me, an' aw read this:

Westward The Hotel,
Street Rebeira, St. Vincent.

This foundacion will provc himself with finest lodging so foods arrange.
Salons attired mode Paris or Londres.

A highest chef distinguish guests according which principles scientifique.

Oranges from the la tree, by sea water accommodatcd with plaza, where thereof rested travcller genially invite.

Mosquito docs not himsclf an pleasure.

Tariff strictestly apply exclusive.

"Come! that's summat like advertisin," aw said. "Let's goo, Squire, an' have a meal upo' scientific principles for once. We s' ne'er get another chance, happen."

"Nowe!" he says. "Aw'm havin noane o' that mak whol there's beef left i' th' ship. Here!" givin th' nigger his card back; "we wanten nowt to-day. We're noane beaun ashore; an' iv we were thy shop wouldn't shuit iv tha'rt t' yead waither."

As th' islands breeten't i' th' mornin sun we catched a first glint o' that wondherful growth o' plants we were to get so used to afore we set faces toard Englan' again. A faint musky smell coome off th' shore, breet-colour't brids flew abeaut, a swarm o' flyin fish, lookin just like swallows, skimmed above t' wayther, dhroppin neaw an' again into th' cool blue weet below. Toard noon some moore boats dhrew up wi fresh-poo'd oranges, lemons, cocoa nuts, an' what not, an' we'd some rare bargainin for an heaur.

Th' say's alive wi sharks o reaund theere, but th' young niggers swim in among 'em quite carless, divin for hawpnies, turnin

summersets, an' sichlike. It gav me a chill to see tuthri long, oily fins slur past; but some road nigger-beef isn't temptin.

On New Year's Day, eighteen hundherd an' eighty-three, we crossed th' line.

"Where is it?" Squire axed when he yerd th' officers talkin abeaut crossin; an' he looked hard o'er th' side, but seed nowt different to usal. He'd begun to feel summat, an' me too. It should ha bin t' depth o' winther bi ony mak ov honest reckonin, but iv t' wind dhropped it geet so roastin wot we could hardly abide, an' there were no sleepin wi moore nor a couple o' sheets on th' bed.

Another week's steady sailin o'er smooth waythers an' we seed lond, an' plenty on it. Th' captain showed us Cape St. Roque one mornin, an' at neet a line o' big meauntains showed dim again th' settin sun. Th' Espinhazo Sierras, they co'd 'em, th' backbwon o' Brazil; an' afther studyin a bit, an' larnin 'at another day or so should bring us to Rio, aw made eaut 'at eaur new facthry mut be somewheere up among thoose hills.

Squire had getten in for a bit of a row th' day afore. Th' steward had takken on a fresh sarvant at St. Vincent—a yollow, shrinkin, fawnin young Lascar, an' one o' th' English passengers couldn't abide him. Whenever thoose two met there were a cleaut or a curse, or oftener bwoth, for th' sarvant, an' nowt he could do were reet; though he were a willin, good-temper't, hard-wortchin lad as onybody needs to see. Th' Englishman used him like a dog, just, an' moore nor one among us cried shame on him; but as he were one o' yor greight swells, wi waxed moustache, new clooas, an' a fayther undher t' Government, he took no notice o' what common folk like us said or thought. Squire had grunted once or twice abeaut puncin this mon iv he didn't give o'er, an once aw yerd him thryin to persuade th' Lascar to hit back an feight for it, good advice enough but noane likely to be takken; so aw partly what expected a shinty afore we londed. One mornin th' Englishman geet up in a sulky temper, for he'd bin loisin at cards o'erneet, an' like plenty moore ov his sort he'd no brass to spare. He went up onto th' deck, an' bang comes th' sarvant again him, hurryin wi a big tureen i' bwoth honds. Smash went pot an' pottatoes, an' off th' sarvant bowted; but t'other catched him up an' started hommerin his yead again th' ship, cursin an' slavverin at t' meauth like a madman. Next minute he geet a welt on th' earhole 'at sent him spinnin again th' stove pipe, an' gether't hissel up to find Squire stonnin o'er him lookin as black as thunner.

"Dal thi skin!" th' mechanic said, takkin his pipe eaut ov his meauth; "iv ever aw catch thee layin a finger on that harmless lad again, aw'll gie thee a puncin tha'll remember for a bit. Aw've a pair o' clogs i' mi box, an' aw'll put 'em on o' purpose to do thee

justice. It's sich heaunds as thee 'at bring th' good owd English name into ill credit; an' no wondher, for iv we were o thy mak we could ne'er pay fourpence-hawpny i' th' shillin."

"I demand satisfaction," th' greight mon stutted, pikin hissel up, his moustache comin eaut o' curl. "Do you know whom I am, fellow?"

"Some weel," Squire said, takkin him bi th' neck an' shakin him like a ratton; "tha'rt a wake imitation ov a gentleman. Thi clooas are reet enough, an' thi yure's getten th' fashionable cut, but there's moore kest iron nor wrought abeaut thee. Touch yon lad again iv tha dar."

"I demand satisfaction," th' fellah stutted again, ready to cry at bein made to look so little, afther bein so long used to thinkin hissel big.

"Satisfaction!" Squire co'd eaut, starin at him. "Aw'll satisfy thee middlin soon iv aw start; but iv tha'll tak sensible advice tha'll lev things as they are."

Th' captain coome up then to see what o t' bother were abeaut, an' aw were forced to admire his sthrong honsome figure, an' bowd sthraightforrad look. He'd bin noane so weel on th' road, but were gettin o'er it a bit.

"What's the matter now?" th' captain axed, so th' swell started a long nominy abeaut th' sarvant's impidence; said he'd bin grossly insulted, an' he'd tell his fayther, have th' steward secked, stop th' boat fro runnin, ruin th' company, get t' moon awther't, an' aw dun' know what.

Th' captain leet him run on whol o his yorn were off th' byem, an' then said, as quiet as could be,

"Damn your father. Will you threaten *me*?" Then he turn't to Squire. "What is the truth of this business?"

"T' thruth is he's towd yo a lot o' lies," Squire says, shakin a neighve as big as a mason's mallet undher t' fellah's nose, "an' for two pins aw'd knock his skennin e'en up. Aw tell yo th' lad's quiet an' willin enough, but he's no pleasur i' livin for this heaunt hommerin an' cursin him."

"Do you mean to say the coward has struck the lad?" axed th' captain, a red spot comin on his cheek.

"Mony a time. He ne'er misses a chance; but he taks care yo're nowheere i' seet when he does it."

"Then, sir, you have broken a rule of the company, besides interfering with my servants. Now, damme, you shall apologise to the Lascar and the steward too, or never put a leg under my table again."

"Good lad, captain!" Squire said, clappin him on t' shooldher. "Stick to that—aw'll back thee up."

"Th' captain grinned at th' idea o' wantin ony backin up on

his own ship; an' Squire, bethinkin hissel 'at his bacca were gwone eaut, let a match on his pipe yead an' fell to smookin again.

So they fot th' steward, rooted th' lad eaut ov a nook i' th' galley where he'd hud hissel, an' th' greight mon had to foot up an' beg pardon. It's to be hoped it 'd do him good, but aw've mi deaubts.

III.—A Warm Shop.

Rio at last, an' th' long say thravel weel o'er. We'd had nowt but th' best o' weather o t' road, hardly ever seein a wave bigger nor Hollinoth con show, but we were noane soory to feel hard greaund undher us again. When Squire had done takkin lev ov his friends fro th' captain deawn, a job 'at took him a whol mornin, we fund some lodgins, reported eaursel at th' agent's office, an' then geet time to look abeaut us a bit.

Th' first thing to be done were to find th' post office an' ax for some letthers, for we'd noather on us yerd a single word fro wom sin' we left. There were noane, an' aw felt some bittherly disappointed. Squire nobbut grunted, an' let his pipe. As we walked away we passed two Portigees chattherin at a corner, bwoth donned i' sleauched hats, knee boots, an' coarse shirts, weel daubed wi slutch.

"Gibble cabara mobilotton sol fa poncher," one on 'em says, or summat like that.

T'other mon were excited. He swung his arms up, sheautin, "Wackerum bolivia topajos coimbranco manchique." Then, as that nobbut made th' first un wag his yead, he brasted eaut o at once, "Ger off wi thee, tha forty-horse-peawer bowstheryead! Tha'd fair stow a grooin three!"

Aw stagger't back again th' heause end; Squire oppen't his meauth wide, lettin his pipe fo an' smash to bits on th' stones. Th' foreigner turn't him reaund an' seed us, muttherin to hissel, "What the hangment's up neaw?"

"Tha talks English weel for a native"—Squire were beginnin, when he made th' chap eaut undher his breawn skin, an sheauted, "Why, tha'rt Billy Greenhalgh fro Marlan!"

"Eh, bless thee, Squire," th' Portigee whimper't, fairly takkin th' big mechanic in his arms. "It's ten year sin' aw seed a Rachda face afore. Is this thi mate? Is he a Rachda chap? Heaw do, friend! Heaw arta, Squire? Heaw's yor folk? What is there fresh Sudden road on? Here! come on wi me; we mun sup o'er this."

"Well, a saup ov ale wain't hurt us," Squire says, as plez't as a fiddler at a sixpenny hop, an' aw felt th' same mysel to leet so soon on a friend fro mi own clod.

"Tha'll find ale dearish dhrink i' these parts," Greenhalgh

says, takkin us into a wineshop. "We're noane at Owd Sam's neaw, think on."

"What is it? Twopence hawpny a glass, happen."

"Hawve a creawn a bottle," says th' Marlanite; so we throubl't noane at that price, but geet some chep spirits, summat like white rum, astid.

Well, we'd a rare crack for a couple ov heaurs. Greenhalgh were an owd sattler i' th' counthry, it seemed. He went eaut in his cwortin days, geet on weel, sent for his lass o'er, geet wed, an' neaw he wortched at a gowd mine up i' th' hills, an' thought iv he'd good luck he met save enough to go back to England wi i' tuthri moore year.

"What han yo com'n a doin?" he wanted to know next. "An' wheere are yo for?"

"We're sentenced for one an' two year penal facthrytude," Squire towd him. "Aw've sin t' name o' th' place once—it's twisted wi cromp, or rheumatics or summat, an' noane safe for Rachda tongues. Mazyteawn aw co it. Tell him where it is, Lijah."

"Aw'll show him," aw said, for aw'd getten it written deawn in a letther to th' agent 'at Misther Frank had gien me. So aw showed him, an' he spelt it eaut.

"Marzagâo," he says. "Oh, aw've bin to that shop. It's up i' Minas Geraes, through Carandahy an' Sabara. Yo'll have above a week's wark gettin up theere."

"It seaunds like a dacent road, shuzheaw, iv th' names are owt to go by," Squire said. "Where done they sell clay pipes, Billy? Mine broke as soon as it seed thee."

"Nay! there's no clays here. Tha mun larn to make an' smooke cigarritos, same as other folk. As for th' road it's a rum un, like o on 'em abeaut here."

"Heaw is it they hannot getten 'em dhrained, an' gas-lamped, an' laid wi Pwllheli sets?" aw axed him.

"They're weel laid wi slutch astid," Greenhalgh said. "We don't oft get o'eryead in it iv we con manage to dodge th' soft bits an' bogholes; an' most o' thoose are gettin filled up neaw wi so mony mules, an' ridhers, an' bullock carts, an' oddments o' that mak, fo'in deawn 'em."

"We s' look weel iv we getten into one an' leeten across th' new machinery at th' bottom," says Squire. "Neaw, waither! Sixpennoth ov unmade cigars!"

Greenhalgh laughed an' ordher't 'em for him, tellin us o their brass were reckon't bi reis, an' gettin us tuthri shillin changed to be gooin on wi.

"It's a healthy shop yo're beaun to," he says; "a lot cooler nor deawn here at th' say level."

That were welcome news enough, for we were o swelther in as

iv set afore a wot fire, an' aw began to see some thinner clooas ud be wanted iv we didn't myen bein rendher't deawn to candle grase.

Aw showed Billy a list o' t' directhors o' th' new facthry, thinkin he met know some on 'em.

"Oh, ah!" he says. "There's a tuthri on 'em weel known here. Dacent chaps too. Hello! there's Miguel Gomez among 'em. What does he know abeaut cotton? He were minin last aw yerd on."

"What arta maundherin abeaut?" Squire axed. "Dost think a chap needs to know owt abeaut cotton to make a facthry directhor? Where hast bin browt up?"

"Aw'm deawn on him," Greenhalgh says, waggin his yead. "Have as little to do wi him as yo con. He's a deep un!"

"We may happen ne'er see him," aw said. "He's nowt to do wi th' management, 'at aw know on, an' he cawn't eight us whether or not."

"There's summat noane gradely abeaut that Gomez," Billy went on. "His charicther's nobbut so-an'-so. It's weel known 'at wherever there's ony brass stirrin he's for havin it, bi ony dodge 'at comes first. Iv yo send letthers wom see 'em into th' post yorsel —thrust nobry else; tak care yor letthers fro Englan are noane stopped an' oppen't; an' think on there's no policemen up yon meauntains, but plenty o' sharp knives an' deep clough holes."

"Howd on!" Squire says. "Tha'rt a comfortin sort ov a chap to leet on in a sthrange lond. Aw s' be ill in a bit, oather wi hearkenin thi tales or smookin these bits o' breawn papper—aw dun' know which."

"O reet, lad," Greenhalgh said; "but keep yor e'en oppen, shuz what else. Iv yo done get kil't don't come playin th' boggart on my durstep, for mi wife's a bit nesh."

We'd to part afore long, as Billy had a fifty-mile mule ride to start on, an' some deawn i' t' meauth we o felt to lev one another. We seed him weel eaut o' th' teawn into a road hung wi white-belled creepers, an' bordher't wi wild fuchsias, an' then Squire set off to buy a pair o' long-sleeved shoon, to get into th' fashion. We bwoth geet a pair, payin twice as mich for 'em as we should have had to do onywheere i' Lancashire, an' spent moore brass i' thin jackets an' brode-brimmed hats to keep th' sun off.

There's some grand shops at Rio, an' i' some on 'em yo con buy nearly ony mortal thing—that is iv yo'n brass enough, for stuff's very dear. Th' teawn stons on a flat slice o' lond, wi hills, creawned wi convents, at th' back, an' fur back again th' hee sierras begin risin, chen afther chen, i' endless lines. As this flat dirt-sthripe's nobbut narrow, th' teawn's had to be built o in a length runnin on bi th' wayther side. It's weel built, too, mostly o' stone; th' heauses square-cut, topped wi red tiles, an' laid eaut

i' honsome sthreets, set off bi cool green threes an' shrubs wi levs like fans. T' main sthreet runs on bi th' wayther edge, an' there's a palace close to th' londin stage.

Toard neet we fund th' agent an' had a crack wi him. He towd us it'd be a week or so afore they sent for us to Mazyteawn, as Squire kessen't th' shop we were bund for; an' as t' weather were so wot at Rio he planned for us to go forrad to a cooler neighbourhood, an' wait there. He were a very nice chap, talkin English as weel as we could, though not quite wi sich a pure Smobridge accent, happen. Aw took him for a Portigee, but that nettl't him rarely, an' we were soon towd he were nowt less nor a full-blooded Andalusian, wi th' full sthrem o' Spenish juice runnin up an' deawn him.

We made for th' lodgins again, havin to look middlin wakken to miss gettin knocked deawn bi so mony durs oppenin eautside astid ov in, an' to dodge t' thram-cars 'at gwone dartin abeaut i' every sthreet, an' shapped off to bed soon, feelin as iv we'd had a hard day. We began to undherston what made folk tak things so yezzy i' thoose sunbrunt parts, an' be so careful abeaut exertin theirsel. Onybody fund in a hurry at Rio gets locked up an' has his yead chopped off, to stop onybody else fro larnin sich wicked ways. Ten peaund's a heavy lwod for a chap to carry, an' a hundherdweight for a bullock cart.

Everybody's weel off i' that teawn; but th' brass mun come to 'em, for it's a sure thing they'll ne'er run afther it. Nobry walks above a yard or two, an' not then beaut a fancy sthriped parasol. It's o thram ridin, or mule an' horseback. We'd watched one mon catchin a thram eautside th' post office. He walked on very gently, an' when a car coome near he stopped an' put up his hond. Th' guard ne'er seed him, so th' machine went rowlin forrad. Wi hawve-a-dozen sharp sthrides th' chap could ha catched it, but howd off! He propped hissel again a shop-front, tarryin for th' next. This time he put his umbrell up, but th' guard were just leetin another cigarette, an' missed seein it; so th' chap let a cigarette too, an' when he seed another car comin walked gently into th' road, stonnin wheere he were forced to be oather sin or run o'er. He catched his bus that time; but even then it looked too mich throuble to climb in.

Th' niggers han a rare time on it i' Brazil. There's plenty on 'em, some brought o'er as slaves an' a rook born on th' clod; an' th' spot shuits 'em as weel as Africa, or betther. Their chief business is to lie i' shady corners an' gape. Squire watched one sthrong-lookin white-yeaded sample for hawve an heaur, an' averaged him up at three gapes every seven minutes an' a sixteenth. When they aren't gapin they're asleep, or just gooin to their baggins, or crawlin back. They'n no need to get weshed—th' sun sweats their dirt off, an' keeps their pores oppen; beside,

it's o white slutch at Rio. Wark ne'er bothers 'em, as they con live for next to nowt i' that climate, an' be moore comfortable beaut clooas nor wi; an' otogether they come as near th' Testament rules o' takkin no thought for to-morn an' layin up no mothetten hawpnies as ony folk ever aw yerd on.

Heawever, we went to bed, as aw were sayin, an' a warm shop we fund it. Aw geet an heaur or two o' brokken sleep, wakkenin up to find a candle blazin an' Squire scuttherin up an deawn th' reawm like a sprint racer, layin abeaut him wi his leather belt, sweat fair teemin off him.

"It'll be th' sun," aw thought to mysel. "It's brain fayver he's getten, an' that'll turn into yollow Jack; an' when he's dyead aw s' ha to turn mechanic, beside cardin an' spinnin."

Just then he flopped deawn on his knees in a corner, sheautin, "Aw have thee neaw, beggar! Come eaut! Bi go! it's wapped deawn that hole."

"Whatever's to do, Squire?"

"Hello, sleepy-yead!" he says, lookin reaund. "Hast done snorin for a bit?"

"Aw've ne'er started yet."

"Oh, nowe! To be sure not! Tha's ne'er yerd o these crickets buzz, buzz, buzzin i' thi earhole, noather, aw reckon."

"Dost think aw coome to bed a-hearkenin crickets?"

"Well, aw didn't mysel, 'at aw know on," Squire says, wipin his weet face; "aw'd made no bargain wi 'em, shuzheaw, but they're summat like owd Wombwell's eddicated monkey, they'll perform afore they're axed. Hast ever sin that monkey, Lijah? Th' beggar olez used to brast off wi his thricks five an' twenty minutes afore th' show started, an' when th' curtain went up he'd do nowt."

"Get into bed, do!" aw grunted, gapin as wide as we'd sin ony o' th' niggers doin. "Whatever arta preawlin abeaut theere for, barfoot?"

"It's this cricket huntin, aw tell thee. Aw've bin afther one sample abeaut three inch long."

"Howd thi din! Tell me it's as big as a pop-bottle, an' ha done wi't."

"Iv that cricket doesn't measur two full inch an' three quathers aw'll eight it first thing to-morn," Squire said, very solemn, comin to mi bedside wi th' candle in his hond. "Beaut saut, too! Dost think aw cawn't tell to a eighth ov an inch bi t' rack o' th' e'e."

"Well, ne'er heed. Get to bed afore tha catches cowd."

"Cowd!" he grumbl't, gettin undher his sheet again. "There is noane i' this counthry. Th' oon's kept wot o reaund th' year here, whether it's bakin day or not."

He sattl't deawn whol mornin afther that, an' aw did th' same, yerin nowt no moore nobbut tuthri mice practisin "Hail, smilin morn," somewheere i' th' tierin.

IV.—Rio to Mazyteawn.

Next mornin we were off i' good time to th' railroad, inclin't for gettin tuthri mile toard a cooler climate afore th' sun geet o his irons wot. We thravell't o day, but like th' chap 'at supped a gallon o' lager beer we ne'er geet mich forradher, becose th' line winds in an' eaut among so mony broos; comin at neetfo to Carandahy, where o th' roads i' Brazil meet—or nearly so. We'd passed mony a hee meauntain an' dashin river, mony a hillside farm an' gowd mine (most o' their workins are just like eaur breast-hee pits, but they tunnel eaut yollow sond an' whiterock, astid o' black coal-dust), an' run through mony a long valley crommed wi wondherful green plants, feelin cooler every mile we went. We seed whol swarms ov hummin birds, a dyel less nor Squire's big cricket, sparklin like painted glass i' th' sunshine, an' plenty o' bigger brids wi very fine fithers but not a song among 'em, noather comic nor sentimental.

As th' railroad went no fur nor this village we'd getten to, it were to be a mule-back job for us to get o'er t'other bit o' counthry. Squire said he'd set plenty o' mules up, but didn't know whether he could ride one or not; an' when they towd us it 'd be a four-day journey he whistl't, scrat his yead, an' let another cigarette.

We could see tuthri samples neaw o' th' slutchy roads Greenhalgh had warned us abeaut. They looked summat awful, an' we began to feel betther satisfied wi th' knee boots, though they'd cost us three gowd sovereigns a pair.

Carandahy's a pottherin little hole, wi twenty heauses or so scatther't abeaut among th' slutch, an' meauntain roads runnin off i' o directions like threads in a spidherweb. It's ill luck to th' poor flee 'at gets fast in 'em, too. It's astonishin heaw busy this little nook is, wi th' railway stoppin theere. Sthrengs o' mules an' ponies are for ever comin an' gooin wi panniers on their backs; heavy carts crawl up an' deawn th' hills wi ten to twenty spon ov oxen to poo 'em; ridhers ov o ranks, nations, an' tempers are olez passin through, plenty on 'em—though weel to-do—wi their spurs sthrapped onto their bare feet. Whol we were theere we seed gangs o' natives come in wi cotton, raw or wovven, Yankees an' English fro different gowd mines, throops o' niggers, wortchin a bit at last, an' every neaw an' again a little reaunt priest on his fat mule, freetenin everybody eaut o' their wits.

It's rare sport shoein mules. Their system theere's for one chap to howd th' leg up whol another mon lets fly wi a hommer; aimin at th' mule foot, but as oft as not catchin th' howdher's knockles, or th' mule bwons, or missin everything. When he does bi chance catch th' nail yead there's a clank like a railroad

collision, th' mule whuzzes it legs abeaut sheautin murdher, an' another start has to be made fro th' beginnin. Squire thought this business promised weel for fun, so he geet a empty barrel eaut o' th' store, upended it, an' sit watchin t' performance a good while. Aw went to fot him to his baggin, an' fund him lookin on wi greight intherist, a little hillock o' cigarette ends beside him.

"Baggin time?" he says. "Aw mun rip mysel away, then. Lijah, aw've sin a bit o' mechanickin i' mi time, but this licks o. Iv theese beggars were put on piece wark they'd soon find a readier dodge nor this. Sithee!" he went on, brastin wi laughin, as t' sthriker sent his hommer beauncin again th' mule ribs, an' him an' his mate an' their cigarettes, an' th' hommer, an' four spring legs went flyin i' o directions. "Did te ever see sich a gam as that afore?" Then he sheauted to th' sthriker, "Neaw, owd un! tha'd put 'em on a dyel betther wi a screwkeigh."

Th' Portigee turn't, jabberin, "Wackle casabianca senor milreis chihuahua cabalatta montefiore," an' so on; like rattlin alley stones in a glass bottle.

"Aw don't believe thee," Squire said, turnin hawve reaund wi his tub i' hond; "tha knows what aw myen weel enough, but tha's too mich stinkin pride to own it. That reminds me o' th' Whitoth navvies, Lijah," he went on as we crossed o'er to th' lodgins. "Two on 'em had bin feightin a while beaut sattlin owt, when one says, 'What are we fo'in eaut for? Tha knows aw love thee!'

'Ah! but aw'm lovin noane o' thee!' t'other says, puncin him again.

'What hast again me?'

'Why, tha skens.'

'That's noane my faurt, is it? It's a misfortin.'

'Misfortin be hanged! It's nowt but thi jadin ignorance.'"

"Keep that mak o' tales for th' Portigees," aw said, "an' come to thi baggin."

"Aw'm comin, lad," he laughed, "an' aw nobbut wish we'd a bit o' dacent moufin or cakebrade waitin for us, astid o' their banana an' mandioca rubbitch. They *con* make tidy cheese here, but that's abeaut o they han to swagger o'er."

We'd bwoth felt th' want o' bread, a thing seldom sin i' thoose parts, an' nowt like th' English sort when fund. Another botherin thing were 'at we'd noather twileet, moonleet, nor gasleet to finish th' days off. It were dark bi seven o' t' clock, so we'd to stop heause-bund; for we could find no sport i' thrampin among slutch bi th' shine ov a lanthron. We geet to bed toard eight, mostly, olez gettin a fine serenade fro croakin frogs, gruntin pigs, clockin hens, an' sichlike musical performers, whol we'd luck to fo asleep.

Alley, alabaster.

Beds theere are yezzy made. Yo get a corn seck, crom it full o' maize sweepins, throttle it wi some bant, an' that's yor bed. There's no need to bother abeaut clooas—yo'll be warm enough, plenty; th' stingin flees 'll tak care o' that. There's one breed o' bitin insects aw used to be very fond on. It dhrives a curly saw deep into a limb, an' yo may poo it i' lumps but it'll ne'er let goo. Another bores into yor foot-sole, an' lays eggs i' th' excavation.

We'd bin a full week sleauchin abeaut Carandahy, an' getten weary o' th' job, afore they sent for us up to th' mill. One mornin we'd getten up at five, as soon as dayleet broke, turnin eaut to smell th' fresh air, an' afore so long a chen o' mules coome up ridden bi hawve a dozen niggers an' brokken-yur't Tupys, or Indians, stoppin near us. One o' th' chaps started off, as usal, wi a lot o' Portigee gibberidge 'at we could make nowt on, though Squire reckon't to keep up a conversation bi noddin his yead, shakin it, puttin in "That's a lie," or "Tha never says," every neaw an' again. Heawever, it turn't eaut to be us they were afther; so we sided o up that day, makin a bowd start up th' meauntains first thing next mornin.

We shapped reet enough at mule ridin, Squire sayin he could feel thankful neaw he'd getten so mich bobby-horse practice whol a lad; th' only bother were 'at t' four-legged things took no notice ov English, bein as likely to stop as not when we towd 'em to gee up. Heaw they ever carried us up thoose roads it's past my reckonin to make eaut. There'd be a mile or two o' steepish risin, through two to three feet deep o' slutch; then some brokken greaund, o lumps an' holes, wi steep rock o' one hond an' a deep clough o' t'other; then, for a change, t' thrack ud turn slap up a slantin wole o' solid limestone, where we'd to hop up steps, like hens climbin a ribbed plank; fro t' top o' that there'd be a long dhrop, where th' mules could tuck their back legs undher 'em an' slur deawn, nobbut gettin deawn to start climbin again next minute.

Squire kept whistlin an' scrattin his yead as we geet moore an' moore acquainted wi this wondherful road, wondherin what mak ov a state his machinery 'd be in wi that style o' thravellin. We stopped o neet at a leausy little baitin shop, geet summat t' eight, an' a good wesh wi a soft cob o' their black swop, emptyin th' suds onto th' dirt floor, as th' fashion is; an' then Squire started:

"Aw'll tell thee what, Lijah; there's a rare oppenin for balloon thraffic up here. He were a bowd chap 'at first carted ring frames o'er these broos, an' he'd be a bowdher yet 'at could get 'em o'er i' one piece. We s' ha to melt thi cardin engines up an' start kestin fresh. They should ha sent a mouldher eaut astid ov a mechanic."

"We mun shap to start their facthry for 'em some road."

"Oh ah!" Squire says, gapin. "We'll manage that, or else make some hondlooms—these turmits 'll ne'er know th' difference. Hey, dhriver! Heaw mony mile han we com'n to-day?"

T' dhriver looked up, poo'd his cigarette eaut, blew some smooke deawn his nose, wagged his yead, an mutther't, hawve asleep, "Gunspackle caracal pätterara, senor."

"Heaw mony mile?" Squire axed, sheautin at him. "Mile! Dost yer? Mile! tha yollow-legged heathen! But it's nó use talkin; aw could go back an' measur it wi a two-foot sooner nor get owt eaut o' thee!"

T' dhriver were fast asleep bi that time, unconsarn't abeaut everything. He knew his mules couldn't get lost, for him an' his mates had fixed two stangs across t' thrack, above an' below th' hut we slept in, so th' only roads eaut were oather bi divin into a clough beaut bottom or crawlin up eighty foot o' sthraight rock. For his passengers he cared nowt; for hissel very little. He slept, snorin hard, t' last threads o' bacca smooke levin his nose-end; ne'er bother't bi t' thribes o' livestock 'at were determin't to worry me an' Squire into maprags. Happy dhriver!

Four days o' this mak brought us to Sabara, three mile fro Mazyteawn; an' here we fund a post office, an aw geet mi first letther fro wom. It were short o' six week sin' aw'd lost seet o' mi wife an' childher, noane a long time to look at, but iv it 'd bin six year aw could hardly ha felt th' separation moore, nor ripped that precious bit o' papper oppen wi keener impatience an' longin. Aw read it wi swimmin e'en, hurryin o through it once to make sure nowt had gwone wrong, then readin quietly every word mi dear lass had to say.

"O's reet, Squire, bwoth at yor heause an' mine. They're o weel an' hearty, thank God!"

"Thank God!" Squire said, very solemn. "Aw do believe tuthri month i' Brazil 'll turn me religious."

He went eaut, geet two sleepin Indians bi th' neck, an' carried 'em squirmin above a hundherd yard; then he let another cigarette an' quieten't deawn. When he coome in again aw read most o' t' letther eaut for him, nobbut keepin back tuthri lines where mi wife had thried to put o her heart's love onto th' papper, i' words myent for no e'en or ears beside mine. T' childher were o behavin very weel, relations had bin kind an' thoughtful, an' Squire's wife sent her best respects, hopin he'd be careful not to make a foo ov hissel. So that were o reet an' satisfyin, an' we could shap abeaut wi leet hearts.

Next mornin we were o up an' off i' good time to reighch this wondherful facthry we'd com'n so fur to find; levin Sabara, wi it slutch-built huts, weedy gardens, coffee-plantins wi owd crops rottin yet on t' neglected threes, unshifted dirt, an' o t'other signs ov a breed o' folk too idle to stir a needless finger. Three mile

up an' deawn steep hills, on a narrow foot-road wi a wildherness o' green stuff on bwoth sides, seein theausans o' gaudy brids, tuthri painted snakes, an' one long-nosed tapir, an' we londed at th' village.

One biggish heause, a hondful o' little huts, an' a long barn-shaped buildin, part finished. That were o th' teawn. O reaund were hee meauntains like big sugar loaves, an' a swift river coome splashin across th' hollow, gettin forrad deawn it three theausan foot ov a dhrop to th' say. Followin th' river bed up we seed a gang o' black an' tan chaps busy wi a waytherwheel shoot, an' gettin reaund a corner o' th' long barn we let on some moore natives emptyin a cart-lwod o' machinery.

A natty, nimble-lookin yollow-skin, wizen-faced, donned like a dandy, stood smookin an' watchin six peawerful niggers sthrivin hard to shift a loom-end. He coome up to us, grinnin o reaund his sharp white teeth.

"From Engleterra come you?" says he.

"Nowe—Rachda," Squire said, busy watchin t' loom-shifthers. "Well, iv this doesn't cap o! Sithee, Lijah! Hawve-a-dozen on 'em to one kestin! Aw'm noane a swearin mon, but——"

"Senor Garside and Senor Marcroft, you shall I call?"

"Squire Marcroft," my mate said, swingin off his mule. "Noane o' thi seeneys, nor sauts noather. This is Lijah Garside—a dacent chap, but nowt to say for hissel. Are yo th' gaffer?"

"Miguel Gomez," th' chap says, pointin to hissel.

"Aw thought so," Squire whisper't to me. "He's an ill un, Lijah, iv looks are owt. Dal it! he's just like a monkey cheawin carraway seed. Wi abeaut ten ton o' rock on him he'd make a rare pidistal for yon waytherwheel they're playin wi up th' broo side."

"Don't be too ready wi that tongue o' thine," aw whisper't back. "It's nowt to us what he is, iv we getten eaur share o' th' wark done."

"Aw'll make a start neaw, then," Squire says, "for iv aw ston watchin these helpless cawves ony longer aw s' be ill."

He went to th' cart-tail, geet howd o' th' loom kestin (th' niggers had managed to shift it abeaut two inch), shoved back some planks they'd brought to slur t' thing deawn on, an' swung th' heavy lump o' metal to th' floor in a crack.

"Ah, viva!" skriked Gomez in a voice like a tewit far gwone i' th' breawntitus. "Ver good! Ver good!"

"That's naught to make thi noise abeaut," Squire grunted. "Aw con undherston these big wages betther neaw, Lijah. We con do as mich in a week as these pitiful objects con i' twelve month."

Seeney, senna.

Aw looked at th' big mechanic, stonnin wi one arm thrown o'er his mule back, sthrong, square-yeaded, honest-lookin; an' then at th' little Portigee dandy, keen, cringin, cat-like, undherhond.

It didn't tak me long to sattle which were th' Mon o' thoose two; an' yet it's sure enough, wherever they'd getten together, i' England or eaut, little Gomez 'd ha bin th' gaffer same as he were here, an' Squire nowt but a journeyman for him.

We looked th' machinery o'er, an' a weary seet we fund it. Everything were brokken 'at possibly could be, an' cliver as aw knew Squire were at his job aw deaubted iv he'd ever make mich eaut o' sich a lot o' scrap. Beside bein brokken o th' tackle were reausty wi lyin eaut i' th' rain, an' cover't wi dust an' slutch.

"O reet," Squire says, when aw towd him what aw thought. "We'll shap some road, tha'll see, an' make their facthry whuzz reaund. When tha's getten thi cards weel grund just run Gomez through 'em. It'll do him good."

Aw wagged mi yead, deaubtin yet. "We con ne'er start wi sich rubbitch as this."

"Start!" Squire co'd eaut, clappin me on th' back. "Han we com'n o t' road fro Sparrow Hill to tell these potyeads we cawn't do th' job? We'll wortch it upo' some tack, mon; an' iv we nobbut getten two throstles an' abeaut eight looms set up they'll make wark enough for fifty o' these thraycle-toffy-colour't objects. Neaw, Gomez, owd breek! We're ready for some baggin."

V.—Tuthri Levs fro Squire's Diary.

Mazyteawn, Jan. 29th, 1883.—Lijah keeps plaguin me abeaut writin mi diary up, becose once for a joke aw towd him aw myent keepin one; an' as there's nowt to do here at neet but fo asleep or catch blackjacks, aw'll practise t' scribblin thrade a bit. Aw mun do summat, that's a sure thing, iv aw'm to howd fro murdherin somebry an' keep mi brains owt like reet i' this miserable hole. It's no shop this for honest Englishmen used to gettin a cowd pint, a quiet gam ov all-fours, an' tuthri mates to fratch wi; an' iv it weren't for Lijah's company aw should ha gwone redmad afore neaw. We're makin hondfuls o' brass; but it's noane th' brass—it's th' position, as Napoleon said when Wellington towd him o his expenses should be paid on th' island.

There's no wark woth mentionin. We'n tuthri different gangs o' labourers rootin abeaut th' shop, but they're o sich yezzy-gooin beggars as aw ne'er yerd on afore. Aw'm fo'in into their habits very nicely. It's no use doin nowt else, becose it's plain enough

Redmad, crazy.

we s' be ready wi th' machinery long afore t' waytherweel an' turbine are fit to start; so iv we getten finished too soon it'll be wrong for th' little yollow-skin 'at reckons to gaffer o'er us, to say nowt o' th' sleepy-lookin coffee-cheeked row o' directhors 'at coome lookin reaund t'other day. We're gettin into a system o' shappin so as to just get through eaur share o' th' wark bi th' time it'll be wanted; an' but for this wot sun we shouldn't slatther mich sweat wi doin it.

This is abeaut th' gam. We getten up at hawve-past five, suppen a cup o' coffee beaut milk, an' gwone into t' facthry. First ov o aw tak a good look reaund to make sure nobry's brokken in durin th' neet; becose there's th' hawve o' one wole to build yet, nowt leet enough to carry away, an' not a sowl within three mile 'at dar steighl owt iv he wants. Then aw walk reaund eautside for a rest, just to get mi wind; an' mostly watch 'em playin wi t' waytherwheel whol breakfast-time. They're shiftin some wark at that job! There's a bonny lot on 'em, some delvin, some layin stones, some studyin, some lyin reaund hawve wakken, an o on 'em smookin; but there's ne'er nowt to show for their labbour. At hawve-past eight we knocken off for th' first meal—almool, as these lost craythers co'n it—beef, black byens, boil't rice, pottatoes, pullen, bananas, an' coffee; o very good, barrin 'at th' beef's oft as taugh as wedgwood. We're fair cravin for butthercakes, Lijah an' me. A shop loave ud send us singin reaund th' teawn, an' a Blackwayther moufin be woth it weight i' gowd. We expected havin tuthri things to put up wi, but ne'er dhrem't runnin short o' butthercakes could ha plagued us to this pitch.

Breakfast o'er we gwone back to eaur wark whol twelve, settin tuthri kestins again th' woles, dhrawin a chalk line or two on th' dirt floor, practisin jugglin wi shuttles an' bobbins, playin at quoits wi byem flanges, or havin argeyments abeaut church an' state; olez busy doin sums wi papper an' pencil iv onybody comes lookin heaw we're gettin on. When Gomez comes aw start filin summat or grumblin abeaut a brokken fittin, or measurin mi lond up to t' thirty-second ov an inch, wondherin heaw the hangment we're ever beaun to squeeze o th' frames in, though we'n reawm enough for twice as mony.

At twelve there's moore coffee, wi a bitin on, just to keep us wick whol dinner-time, abeaut three o' t' clock. Afther a good dinner (jantar we co'n it) i' this wot climate wark's nowt but a trouble; so we gwone bathin deawn th' river, catchin hummin-brids, or watchin th' pisamoors march abeaut like armies o' sodiers. There's millions o' thoose fawse things here, some o' their hillocks stonnin as hee as th' heause tops, an' we ne'er getten weary o' studyin their owd-fashion't dodges.

Pullen, poultry. *Pisamoors*, ants.

So we con shap middlin to get through a day's wark, iv th' manager nobbut alleaws us plenty o' bant. There's one dhraw-back—it's pitch dark bi baggin time, an' as there's no gaslamps i' t' sthreets, an' no sthreets to put 'em in, we're forced to stop i' th' heause, read a bit, write diaries, fo eaut, or go to bed.

We're livin in a reawm o' th' manager's heause, an' he makes us feel quite awom. He's a smart, dacent chap, weel up in his business, an' he's a comfortable shop on it here, but as Gomez nobbut lives hawve a mile off he's olez tootin reaund an' meddlin wi things he knows nowt abeaut. Iv aw were th' manager aw wouldn't ston it.

Aw said to Gomez to-day "Where's yor honds beaun to live when t' facthry starts? There's no heauses for 'em 'at aw con see."

"Arrange we all that," he says, showin his ivories. "Many houses shall we soon build."

"Tha shaps very tidy at English for a Portigee," aw towd him; "but they mun ha larn't thee eaut ov a lift-honded spellin-book. Let thi talk goo reaund fro yest to west wi th' sun, an' keep thi teeth hud, an' aw'll make a scholar on thee in a bit. But abeaut thoose heauses—iv yo're for buildin, get agate. Ratch yon way-thershoot job eaut as they will it wain't last 'em above two month moore, an' it'll be folly to keep yor facthry stonnin whol th' cottages are run up."

That were a new leet to him otogether, as aw'd expected it would be. For o they're so worried wi emmets they'n no moore foreseet i' Mazyteawn nor a cuckoo. Nowt's wanted whol they're at a stonstill for it; as long as they'n a foot o' clear greaund afore their nose-ends they're reet.

Their system o' buildin's like everything else abeaut 'em—wrong end first. Astid o' layin a feaundation an' buildin uparts, like Christians, they proppen their riggin-three up wi four sticks, one at every corner, an' hang their woles onto it. O th' joinerin wark's finished off—window frames, dur holes, an' so on—an' t'other wole-space wattl't in wi lats an' slutch. Then th' consarn nobbut wants a tack or two, just to howd it to th' greaund, or teein to a three-stump wi a bit o' clewkin, an' yo con start livin inside ony time iv yo'll mind fro sneezin.

As we left t' facthry to-neet a chap rode up on horseback an' started beggin. We could make no sense ov his jibber-jabber, to be sure, but there were no mistake abeaut his business when he poo'd his billycock off an' passed it reaund. Aw'd a couple o' brass time-checks i' mi pocket bi good luck, so aw gav him one, an' he nearly went off his yead wi joy, thinkin he'd getten howd o' some rare foreign gowdpiece. He sthruck wark on t' sthrength o' sich a wyntfo, an' started playin him for th' neet.

"It's a corker when th' cadgers con ride abeaut that road," aw

said to Lijah. "What does th' owd provarb say—set a beggar on horseback an' he'll ride to——"

"Rio," Lijah says in his quiet way; so we coome in to get some porritch.

Feb. 14.—This is Volantine Day i' Rachda, but it's nowt here, so t' less said abeaut it an' t' betther. Aw were up at th' wheel-race again this mornin watchin th' masons penkin at stones wi their little picks, three on 'em squarin up abeaut as mich in a day as a gradely mon wi mallet an' chisel could shift in hawve an heaur, when Mrs. Gomez coome up a-lookin. Hoo's a sharp weel-favvour't little body, noane o'er an' above happy bi o acceaunts. We'd a long talk i' Portigee an' English, gettin on just as weel as iv t' one knew what t'other were dhrivin at, makin eaut bi signs what words couldn't do for us.

Toard noon Gomez coome through t' facthry, where aw were busy settin looms up, lookin as black as thunner.

"To my wife you speak not," he stutted eaut, as mad as a moonraker. "Away you approach when she follow, and not at all speak."

"What art moidherin abeaut, tha little foo?" aw said, hawve inclin't to cob mi screwkeigh at him, wipin mi sweatin foryead on a bare arm. "Aw'd ne'er bother to speighk iv aw couldn't do it different to thee, shuzheaw. Is thy wife ony betther nor other folk, 'at hoo's noane to be spokken to?"

Aw geet a lot moore of his jabber, takkin no moore notice on him. When he'd done an' bowted Lijah looked reaund an' says,

"Tha's done it neaw, Squire! He's jealous on thee."

"An' no wondher," aw said. "He knows weel enough no sensible woman ud look at a kittlin like him when there's full-groon chaps abeaut. Bi go, Lijah! tha mun ne'er let on to my owd woman abeaut this, or aw s' ne'er yer th' end on't. Volantine Day, too!"

He laughed, sayin he'd be careful, an' we thought no moore on it; but Gomez keeps carryin his spite wi him, aw con see.

Everybody else is very friendly an' civil. These foreigners han o very good manners, barrin one bad habit o' wipin their meauths on th' table-cloth when they'n finished eightin. They're very gentle an' quiet, olez good-temper't, an' as inquisitive as childher. Yor business is their business. They'll meddle wi o yor consarns iv yo let 'em; but yo're olez welcome to do th' same wi them.

We mun be off to bed, Lijah says. It's nine o' t' clock, pitch dark, an' we're th' only wakken folk on th' clod. Eautside there's a steady hummin fro t' dhroves ov insects knockin abeaut, an' theausans o' fireflees shine on every bonk. Aw seed a bunch o' yollow buttherflees to-day, tuthri score on 'em o in a lump, lookin just like a hondful o' daffydeawndillies. It's a grand counthry, for

sure—iv it were nobbut i' Rachda. So good neet, an' God bless o th' folk across yon rowlin say.

March 19.—We'n getten things ship-shape i' t' facthry neaw, an' con do wi some turnin peawer. Iv yon niggers putten so mich moore time in o'er their bit ov a wheelrace aw'll punce 'em eaut o' th' road an tackle th' job mysel. Eaur wage is gooin on, an' we wanten to be doin summat for it; an' we're determin't to be runnin afore another fortnit, or make somebry beaunce.

Th' English mail coome in at baggin-time to-neet, bringin a hondful o' letthers an' newspappers for us.

"Why, there's a letther for thee, Squire, this time," my mate says, howdin it eaut. "Tha mun be i' special favvour just neaw."

"What's wrong awom?" aw said, shakin mi nob. "Th' owd woman ud ne'er write beaut havin summat to find faurt wi, special favvour or not. It's oather bad news or religious advice."

Aw rove it oppen an' read eaut what th' owd lass had to say for hersel.

"my dear husband

i write this few lines hoping as times is going on all reet with you as it leeves me at presant but i am sorry to say we have received no munney from you and are getting very near clemmed i suppose you will slotch hall your wages up for ale as there is noboddy in Brazzil to look after you a bit and keep you sthraight it would seem you better to have thought for them what is left here and try to keep your wife out of Dernley but no doubt you are too big a felly now to think of annything so common as your wedded wife and i can be parish't for what you care so no more at presant from yours truely

SUSAN MARCROFT.

P.S.—hoping to receive some munney by next post and be sure to wear the flannel chest protector i hud in your box as i am told the nights is verry cold where you live."

Aw fot th' owd packin-case 'at sarves us for a table sich a welt as split it fro end to side, makin a fine rattle among th' pots, an' geet up.

"Come on, Lijah," aw splutther't, chawkin wi temper; "it wain't tak long to sattle this job."

"Howd just a minute," he says. "Iv thy brass has gwone wrong mine 'll be afther it. Let's see."

He looked his letthers through an' grunted, "Ah! just so! They'n never dhrawn a penny awom. Come on, Squire."

We went a-seechin Gomez, fund him in th' manager's office, an' beaut ony meemawin aw said,

"Lijah an' me sattl't wi thee above three month sin' to send some brass to Rachda. Heaw leets tha's ne'er done it?"

He turn't o maks o' colours, like a dyead yerrin in a gutther, an' mutther't summat abeaut havin insthructed his agent to send th' brass forrad. But that tale were o lies, we knew.

"Iv yo'd insthructed yor agent at th' proper time thoose wages ud ha bin liver't long sin'," Lijah towd him. "Here's eaur wives an' families to be left i' want through yor carlessness! Done yo think we'n com'n three theausan mile to be made foos on? Han yo sent that brass off or not?"

"Si, si, Senor Garside. Yes, yes, yes."

"Heaw long sin'?"

"Ago behind four weeks, my honour upon."

"Heaw leets tha didn't send it off above three month sin', as we towd thee to do?" aw axed him.

He'd say nowt to that, but it sthruck me o at once. "Bi gum! aw con see through it," aw co'd eaut, slappin mi leg. "Aw recollect th' exchange rate were dear just abeaut then, for tha thried to chet me bi givin twenty shillin for English sovereigns whol they were fottin twenty-three i' th' market. Tha narrow-backed, skennin, pawmpeckl't slag-lump! Aw'll bet tha's bin howdin that brass i' th' bank waitin for th' exchange to dhrop, clemmin eaur folk awom an' gettin me a bad charicther, just to addle tuthri dirty shillin for thi own peauch. By the lord Harry! iv ever tha plays us sich a mank again we'll hommer bits off thee!"

"Tha'rt reet, aw do believe!" Lijah says; but skennox ud say nowt no road, so we'd to lev him, feelin surer nor ever he'd rogue us iv he geet hawve a chance.

VI.—Squire's Diary *(continued).*

April Foo Day.—There'll be a bit o' quietness for us to-day, as it's Sunday, an' aw con tinker mi diary up a bit. It looks very weel as far as aw've getten, written upo good carthridge papper wi a joiners' blacklead 'at makes fine bowd sthrokes. Ink 's too dear to use mich on—nowt less nor sixpence for a penny bottle. Lijah says it'll be a useful record o' what we're gooin through, an' rooses me for havin good inseet into things, wi a knack o' puttin happenins into readable shap an' tidy ordher. Aw darsay he's reet, as usal; but iv aw have sich things they'n com'n o' theirsel. Th' owd lad sits o'ernenst me, writin his Sunday letther to his missis, sthrokin his full breawn byert, wi neaw a twinkle an' neaw a weet-dhrop in his e'en.

Aw've had mony a rook o' mates i' mi time, but ne'er one aw liked betther nor this. He's so quiet an' stiddy, wi no beaunce abeaut him, hardly a word to say beaut he's spokken to, an' yet wi so mich in his yead, sich a knowledge ov his business, so tendher an' reet minded. When young Misther Frank gav me this job he said, "You will find Garside is a thorough master in factory work, and altogether a man any firm might be proud to send abroad to

Pawmpeckl't, freckled. *Rooses*, praises.

represent it." He were reet too, by gum! Lijah's as good a mechanic as me, very near. He could ha wrostl't o this job hissel an' bin ready i' plenty o' time, for o there's bin so mich brokken stuff to petch up; an' yo may guess there's bin middlin when aw tell yo we'd twenty brokken capbars to plate for one throstle. Aw should ha bin fast mony a time but for his cliverness an' rezonin way o' plannin things; an' what aw should ha done beaut his company i' this God-forgetten hole there's no tellin, but it's a sure thing aw could ne'er ha carried mi wits wom again. Aw'll have a word wi th' owd brid.

"Neaw, Lijah! Dar we venthur on another smooke?"

"Aw dar iv tha dar," he says, wakkenin up; so we leeten some wom-made cigars, smilin at one another through th' curlin blue rings.

"What arta dhremin abeaut, owd mon?"

"Aw've bin wishin," Lijah tells me, wi a far-seechin look on his honsome face.

"Well, tha's brass enough to turn o'er i' thi pocket neaw; but there's no cuckoo to sing, noather. Turn thi stoo reaund once an' wish again."

"Aw've bin wishin, an' studyin, an' longin. Heaw dost like this reawm, Squire?"

"It's reet enough. A dacent fire-range ud mend it, wi oon, boiler, an' a gradely chimbley, astid o' just tuthri nicks to howd pons, wi a hole i' th' wole for smooke to climb eaut at when it isn't too idle. T' furnithur's nowt mich, to be sure—aw ne'er co a kitchen fitted up mysel beaut there's a good dhresser in it. But th' shop's reet enough."

Lijah looks at his watch, an' gwoes on, dhremlike,

"My childher 'll just be gettin wom fro th' Sunday schoo, aw think, alleawin for th' variation i' time. Their mother sits bi th' fire, wi her kettle boilin ready to make th' baggin as soon as her little uns getten in. Her face is rayther deawnkest, for hoo's thinkin abeaut me an' longin to clip me in her arms once again, but hoo breetens up when t' childher bang in full o' cheerful chatther an' joke. They sitten deawn to their baggins, settin up my empty cheer at th' table top an' layin a cup for me, chance aw should happen to dhrop in; an' they talken abeaut me among their t'other news, wishin they had me back—as God knows aw nobbut wish they had! Then at bedtime mi little Lucy kneels her deawn in her white neetgeawn, axin her Fayther i' heaven to watch o'er her poor lonely fayther lost i' Merica, an' mi wife teems o her full heart eaut afore th' same greight Judge an' Ordherer ov us o, prayin 'at aw may be weel guarded an' brought safe back at last. Aw con see 'em, Squire! Aw con see 'em! Thoose are th' orniments this reawm wants to set it off, an' whol we're beaut 'em it 'll ne'er be nowt to me."

His voice breighks an' aw'm busy sniffin, so we sitten tongue-tee'd a bit an' then fo'n to writin again. Aw've some picthers awom i' mind, too, but aw say naught abeaut 'em. Everybody hasn't getten a born angel for a wife same as him.

We'd a stirrin day yestherday an' a lot o' visithors to look o'er t' facthry. We'n getten a new boat into th' river, to run deawn to Sabara an' back; so it should be yezzier gettin to th' teawn neaw nor havin three mile o' slutch to wade through. It's as big as a Hollinoth styemer, an' it 'll come in hondy to bring buildin stuff for th' new cottages. Hee time, too. Aw seed fourteen bullocks come in yestherday wi a lwod o' stone abeaut enough for a donkey cart—happen abeaut a dozen lumps, a foot square. When t' dhrivers had brought their carryvan to a stonstill, wi sheautin an' cursin enough to shift a rigiment, up coome two bowd labourers smookin cigarettes, bringin a hond-barrow to carry th' heavy lumps o' rock across to th' masons. Aw could ha shifted o th' dollop at twice, but theese hearties had moore wit—they carried th' stones one at once, takkin up as mich time as they could do, an' it took 'em above an heaur to finish.

So mony pratty young women coome in 'at aw very near blushed. Aw showed 'em o reaund, explainin different things to 'em i' good English whol they chatther't Portigee, an' offer't to give 'em a twirl in th' cotton gin, but they 'd ha noane. They were donned up i' clen showy print frocks, wi brode-brimmed sthraw hats an' flyin yure, an' as they coome single file up th' road—for there's no cosy here to spread eaut on—they looked a picther. When aw turn't a loom reaund bi hond, showin 'em heaw th' shuttles picked across, they fair danced, clappin their honds an' sheautin "Bo neet! bo neet!" myenin to say it were very nice, iv they could nobbut ha spokken, poor things.

Aysther Monday.—We're noane started runnin yet. Yon skilled niggers up th' broo han shapped to loise us another fortnit wi breighkin t' waytherwheel. Iv there isn't summat done soon aw'll gear a hondle to th' main shaft, an' Lijah an' me con turn o th' consarn, like eaur Susan manglin her week's weshin. It's time we did summat for a livin. Iv a Lancashire facthry owner geet his brass cobbed away at this bat he'd use language, an' his feet too.

We sailed deawn to Sabara o' Good Friday, findin sich stirrins as never. O th' folk for mony a mile reaund abeaut coome in to yer th' church sarvices an' walk i' procession through t' slutch. They kept it up o day o' Sethurday, hangin Judas Iscariot at neet an' then brunnin him. It's a general haliday o through Brazil, they say'n, an' everybody taks part i' these religious performances. Everybody will do, aw darsay, for th' folk here are so desperate religious 'at there's hardly ony stirrin for 'em. Every blaggard wears a cross or a relic or summat; an' gwoes to mass iv he has

to rob somebry next minute. Mig. Gomez sports a gowd cross reaund his throttle; some good it does him too, for iv there's a wur sample nor him aw should like to see it. Big crosses are set up i' every village, an' here an' theere bi th' roadsides; an' theere yo'll find mulhers an' homens (as we co'n women an' chaps) kneelin to say their prayers, an' find as soon as they getten up 'at they 'll chet yo some road or thry hard. Be hanged to 'em!

May 20.—We geet news this mornin o' th' Rachda Teawn Ho fire just as we sit gettin some breakfast. Aw'd a meauth full o' melancia, gratther't cheese, an' syrup, when Lijah sheauted eaut,

"Why, Squire! What dost think! Rachda Teawn Ho spire's bin brunt deawn!"

Aw dhropped a chicken leg aw'd myent doin some business wi, stared at him, an' axed,

"What's getten Sant George, then?"

"He's deawn, that's o aw con tell thee. There'll be tuthri ton o' snuff boxes cut eaut ov his ribs, aw reckon."

A "Rio News" had com'n up wi th' English mail, an' aw fund this in it:

> "The other day a planter of Itajuba, named Manoel Custodio dos Santos (or, Manuel Custodian of the Saints), caught one of his slaves eating a piece of sugar cane. Punishment being threatened, which was always of the most savage description, the slave ran away, but subsequently returned. On presenting himself to his master he was first knocked down, then his four front upper teeth were wrenched out with a pair of pincers, and the four lower ones were broken off by blows with the same instrument—and all by the hand of the master himself. The poor slave went to the police authorities and an investigation was made, but, as we all know, nothing will be done."

So we went back to eaur wark, feelin sure Brazil were a grand shop to live in.

T' weather gets rayther frosty mornin an' neet, makin these niggers an' yollow-backs dither an' rattle their teeth. A gradely cowd wynt 'd kill 'em off like midges.

We'n bought two horses, Lijah an' me. They cost us four peaund ten apiece, an' it'll tak two shillin a week to keep 'em, so they're rayther a dear spec.; but we s' have a chance o' stirrin abeaut t' counthry a bit ov a weekend neaw, beaut gettin up to th' knees i' slutch, an' iv we getten weary o' keepin t' things we con eight 'em or sell 'em off again.

May 28.—We'n shapped it at last! T' waytherwheel turn't it first summerset last Wednesday, an' we'n bin busy sin' squarin th' gearin up an' grindin cards. On th' Friday we'd a bit ov a footin do. T' directhors coome, bringin a lot moore folk wi 'em; some speeches were made, a band sthruck up, everybody sheauted "Viva! viva!" some dinner were sarved up i' th' cookin pons, fireworks were cracked off, an' otogether we ne'er seed sich times among these broos.

Yestherday bein good Sunday we sattl't to thry th' horses, an' practise ridin a bit. We'd bin itchin a good while to slip o'er to a place co'd Morro Velho, yerin there were some Englishmen at a gowd mine theere, so we made up to have a shot at it. Lijah went sperrin th' road eaut fro Gomez, an' th' owd foo towd him,

"Southward you shall depart until appears a mule track the moors upon, where you shall divide west to follow across before, turning north when catch from Sabara you to the mine the broad path."

"Ger off!" aw said when mi mate coome back reckonin he could find his road bi sich a guide book as that. "Aw'm noane venthurin at that bat, wi neet fo'in as sudden as it does here. Iv we once getten lost we s' be wandherin back to Rachda or somewheere, an' it's my belief Mig. 'd sooner loise us nor not."

Aw rooted eaut a Portigee 'at knew tuthri words ov English, an' sperred off him. Afther a dyel o' jabber to no good aw gav him mi joiners' lead an' a sheet o' papper to dhraw me a map.

"Muito bo, amigo," aw towd him afther he'd done, for aw like to cackle Portigee a bit on a Sethurday afthernoon. "Very good for a larner. We con knock th' road neaw, an' aw'll speighk for th' yead designer's shop for thee."

So off we set when dayleet sarved us o' Sunday mornin, soon afther six o' t' clock, ridin through as lonely a bit o' counthry as could weel be fund. Th' undherbrush were deein deawn neaw for t' winther, so we could see abeaut us a bit. Fro one hill-top we geet quite a view o reaund, lookin o'er a collection o' Brimrod Hills poppin their yeads up i' every direction, thick set wi cedhar, pereiba, jaracanda, palms, scrubbin brush, an' a taugh creepin plant co'd embey, used a dyel for bridles, whips, an' sichlike, but a long way off bein up to clewkin. It's a nice ride across thoose moors for onybody fond o' walkin on a knife-edge, or balancin on a potshelf; becose yo'n olez th' satisfaction o' knowin 'at iv yo missen a foot there's a clen dhrop o' tuthri score yard deawn th' cliff edge, wi plenty o' jagged points stickin up ready at th' bottom. It's best bi dayleet, happen; for my taste, as heaw.

In a while we coome into th' main road followin afther afore behinnd Sabara, as that foo ov a Gomez said, an' slap th' horses went up to their shooldhers in a slutch hole, daubin us theegh-deep.

"We'd some sense makin so mich labbour oilin eaur shoon this mornin," aw said. "We cawn't get ony wur neaw; let's throt a bit."

Yezzy enough to say, but heaw would yo shap it wi a foreign horse, too thick-skinned for whip or spur, an' born wi a idle gift? Aw tinker't at mine for awhile beaut stirrin it above a slow walk, whol aw geet mad an' fot it a good welt on th' earhole. That shifted t' thing. It yead went deawn, it heels coome up, an' off aw went shuttherin into a weet leetin shop.

"Shall aw do neaw dost think?" aw axed th' horse, pikin misel up an' turnin to show it heaw cliverly it'd slat me o reaund. "Iv tha'rt thinkin o' rowlin me o'er again, walkin o'er me, or owt o' that, just mention it."

Th' horse said nowt, not undherstondin English, so we went on again, Lijah doin nowt but laugh. In a bit t' clay dhried hard on mi clooas, an' aw geet a good idea how bein hawve-baked feels; but o that were nowt when we londed i' th' minin village an' yerd a deep sthrong voice co eaut,

"Welcome, amigos! Descendibus and partake of some progibus."

"God bless thi pratty face!" aw co'd eaut to th' talker, a brode six-foot wi black byert enough for two. "Tha's a tongue like silver, an' talks th' best English ever aw yerd."

"Why, you are a Lancashire lad!" t' sthranger said, quaverin a bit like in his lusty throttle. "You never happened to hear of a place called Bradley Fold, did you?"

"Not us!" aw said. "We ne'er happen't to be born just t'other side Ashoth Moor, nor get baptised i' th' Roch, nor ston upo' Knowe Hill gawpin, noather; yo may tell that bi mi Cockney twang."

"Here, come in!" th' giant sheauted, rivin Lijah off his horse. "Lothario, you black rascal, take these tits to the stable. Come in! Come in, boys! My wife's a Heywood woman."

"Howd on!" aw said. "Aw'm noane fit for ladies to look at. Heaw mun aw get this dirt off?"

He laughed. "What have you been trying to do?"

"Just samplin t' slutch-depth," aw said. "Aw'm thinkin o patentin a new road scraper."

He towd me to bother noane, so we went forrad, slutch an' o, into a womly little heause, most like one fro th' owd counthry ov owt we'd sin yet; th' chap's wife an' two childher sittin theere comely an' clen, wi some dacent furnithur abeaut 'em—even to a mahogany dhresser. Theere we sit for three mortal heaurs beaut thinkin o' shiftin, an' theere we could ha weel liked to sit whol neaw, hutchin wi envy to see folk so happy together, divin into a gradely English meal once again, talkin, laughin, whimperin o at once. It nearly made up for o we'd gwone through to meet wi sich a welcome, an' see that Yeawood woman's breet e'en twinkle or groo dim as we chatther't on. Aw coome eaut wi a lot o' wild talk, just to keep things gooin, for aw knew Lijah wouldn't say mich. Poor chap! He sit lookin fro th' missis to her childher playin 'em quietly in a nook, an' his big heart were full. Bi good luck aw kept th' folk so busy 'at noather on 'em thought to speighk to him whol he'd getten howd ov hissel again; iv they had done he'd ha brasted eaut cryin, an' that olez makes a chap look soft.

Eaur new friend turn't eaut to be a civil engineer, one o' th' yead gaffers o'er th' mine; an' he'd ha bin fain to show us reaund iv time had sarved. We'd to promise to goo again afore long, an' towd him we should want little pressin to co an' stop otogether. Afore we left some moore friends showed theirsel—t' docthor, cashier, timekeeper, an' th' captain, yead mon o'er o th' dollop.

Yo may judge heaw minutes slipped away among that lot, an' heaw lonesome we felt thrailin back among th' slutch toard Mazy-teawn lockups. They o thought moore abeaut Lijah nor they did abeaut me, as usal. Th' engineer axed me what made him so quiet, an' aw whisper't back,

"Ax yorsel heaw yo'd feel comin here afther bein six month away fro yor wife an' childher, wi no prospect o' seein 'em for eighteen month moore. He's three babbies awom i' Rachda, an' as good a wife as e'er a chap were blessed wi. Con yo see neaw?"

He blinked an' nodded. "Poor fellow! He looks kindly and capable. What a fine massive head he has!"

"Yo'n fund him eaut," aw said. "He's o that an' a bit beside."

So th' engineer passed it reaund quietly, an' they were o as good to Lijah as iv he'd belonged o th' gowd mine hissel. When we'd climb't up th' horses ready for startin back, t' fayther brought his young uns eaut an' hove 'em up to kiss us. That bit touched *me* rayther, though th' sentimental business is nowt i' my road; as for Lijah, he welly rowl't off his galloway.

We londed back bi th' edge o' dark, seein nowt but a wild animal or two on th' road. Aw'd a shot at a big eaunce wi mi garusha, but nobbut hit a limestone rock. Th' eaunce (moore like a forty peaund) is a sort o' tiger-bred thing, an' a garusha's a pistil. Done yo see?

VII.—Squire's Diary (Continued).

July 30.—Aw wish we were weel eaut o' this hole! My time 'll be up at Kesmas, as aw nobbut coome eaut for a twelvemonth, so aw con happen shap to live whol then upo' some tack; but what Lijah's beaun to do when aw'm gwone licks me otogether. Aw'll hawk yerrin afore aw'll lev mi native clod again.

We'n getten a heause ov eaur own neaw, an' for th' last fortnit we'n bin moo'd eaut wi friends comin a warmin it. We're at th' end ov a long row, an' as there's no tierin we con yer o 'at gwoes on i' every heause, an' sheaut ov a neighbour beaut levin th' hobend. There's olez guitars tinkle, tinkle, seaundin somewheere abeaut. They're yezzy to play, as it matthers nowt abeaut ony tune, an' just shuit these shiftless imps. As long as a Portigee con sit tinklin he's reet; but set him to some dhree wark an' he'll soon lap a cleaut reaund his yead an' be ill. A gang o' folk 'll come a serenadin us tuthri neets a week, gam to stop up yeawlin whol two

o't' clock, an' sup up o there is. Aw'll give 'em a lesson i' singin some o' these neets, iv aw con just think at it, an' that'll end their foolishness.

Aw've getten on very weel wi these folk, tak 'em otogether. They're like groon-up childher, an' wanten humourin a bit, but they're as polite an' weel-manner't as lords an' ladies, an' seldom eaut o' temper. Banjo tinklin's nowt i' my line, so aw've thried to teighch some o' th' chaps a gam or two to pass time on; but it's no go, they're o too idle to stir theirsel. Aw've getten one or two agate o' domino playin, an' thried hard to dhrill all fours into their thick yeads, but they're too short o' gumption. They'n no gams o' their own woth owt. Some on 'em 'll sit i' couples hawve a day doin a performance summat like "Simon says thumbs up;" one flirtin his hond up an' deawn whol t'other guesses heaw mony fingers he's shown. One thing they con teighch me to some tune —chetin. Aw're used to think mysel middlin sharp at takkin rises eaut o' folk, but bless yor sowl! these ham-an'-egg colour't gawmless lookin beggars could steighl mi back-teeth eaut o' mi yead iv they took a fancy to do it. Lyin comes nathural to 'em, an' it's fair touchin to see heaw innicent they'll walk off wi a bit o' sombry else's property.

We rode o'er to Sabara last Sunday, to th' post office. We'd getten suspicious 'at somebry oppen't eaur letthers when we wrote wom, readin 'em o'er an' nobbut sendin forrad what they'd a mind, so we'd thought o' postin some eaursel that day, to make sure. Heawever, we were done at th' finish, for their post office is nobbut oppen so mony heaurs a day, an' we fund it locked up. We looked in at th' main store, or venda, where everything's sowd fro dhried shrimps at twenty reis (a whol hawpny) apiece to native topaz at ony price they con persuade folk to give, an' fund a cheerful gang o' chaps theere chattherin an' suppin cidher wi a dash o' brandy in it.

They'd a bit ov a joke on, we fund eaut. A young Cornwall chap had bin livin i' th' neighbourhood tuthri year, an' seein his road to sattlin he'd sent brass o'er to bring his sweetheart fro Englan to wed him. T' lass had sail't off o reet, but on shipboard hoo fell i' love wi another mon, an' wed him as soon as they londed at Rio; so when number one turn't up to fot her there were some sport. Number two made things reet bi payin t'other mon th' passage brass he'd advanced, an' it's to be hoped he'll find his wife woth what hoo's cost him; though aw've some smattherins o deaubt whether aw should ha loased her eaut o' pop mysel.

In a bit a chap coome up axin iv we weren't fro Mazyteawn, so we towd him he'd guessed reet.

"Why have you never answered my letters?" he axed us next; an' that made us stare at him a bit.

"Letthers!" Lijah says. "What letthers?"

"You have not received them I expect," th' chap said. "I thought as much. My name is Mitchell. I am a director of a large mill between this and Rio, and I have written twice to see if we could make terms with you when your present contract expires."

"We'n ne'er yerd a word abeaut it," Lijah said. "T' letthers mun ha getten lost i'th' slutch."

"Lost be hanged!" aw co'd eaut. "It's owd Mig. again, aw'll bet thee a milreis to a penny dobber. He's getten 'em!"

"Iv he has—" Lijah mutther't, settin his teeth an' doublin his neighve. "Aw've bin jealous on him a good bit, maisther; but he's thryin his gam on wi th' wrong chaps."

"The trick is common enough here," Mitchell said. "The directors will be afraid of any other company tempting you away before your time is up. I should have come up to see you before long if we had not met. One of you finishes about Christmas, I believe?"

"That's me," aw said.

"Come and start under me, then. I can give you a better place and more pay than you are getting now."

"Iv yo'd gie me a gowd mine aw'd stop noane. Not me!"

He thried hard to persuade me to awther mi mind, but he met as weel ha whistl't. Then he'd a do at Lijah, wastin his time again. Brass or no brass we were noane stoppin i' that leausy lond five minutes longer nor we were forced.

"Nowe, Mitchell!" aw said, "it'll do noane, so save thi wynt. There's noane hawve enoo bakin days here for folk 'at's bin rear't upo' Sam Fiddle cakebread. Aw've etten so mich pork latly 'at gruntin comes nathural to me neaw, an' iv aw venthur't to stop longer aw should be doin some cross-cut Darwinism, an' turnin into a four-legged un, or summat o' that mak. It'll do noane!"

He laughed at that, an' gav o'er botherin us; so in a bit we wandher't o'er to th' post office again, findin it oppen this time, geet t' letthers safe 'liver't, an' bowted back up-broo to Mazyteawn, seein nowt but tuthri antelopes an' snakes on th' road.

August 12.—We'd another mill footin yestherday, a gradely do this time. Th' owd vicar coome fro Sabara, o t' breawn directhors coome wi creawds o' folk beside, an' they'd a rare flare up. Hee mass were gwone through for abeaut an heaur an' a hawve first thing i' t' mornin, a lot o' fireworks an' bombs were sent up, th' chen were takken off th' brass band, an' tuthri yollow skins made speeches. Then they o gether't in a long procession, wi crosses, leeted candles, holy wayther, incense, an' t'other general tackle, an' set off for a walk. First they thrail't up to th' waytherwheel, sprinklin it o'er wi a weet brush; next they slurred deawn to t' facthry, baptisin that; then they marched through every alley, slattin o th' machinery.

Lijah an' me stood hutched up in a nook, watchin their tom-foolery an' thinkin there'd ha to be some rubbin wi grasy waste in a bit, or else middlin o' reausty metal.

"Th' frames should run neaw," Lijah says, very dhry. "Iv this wain't make 'em weighve an' spin it's a poor look eaut."

"Goo an' poo thi lubricathors off," aw said. "There'll be no moore oilin wanted aw sh' think. Tha may as weel hang thysel on th' shaftin whol tha'rt agate. Tha'll ne'er be needed no moore."

We'd a grand banquet afther t' procession broke up, an' made a neet on't, wi sich yeawlin o' vivas as met ha freeten't a whol army o' tom cats. We geet no sleep, for th' excitable beggars were preawlin abeaut o neet, makin as mich din as they could; their lanthrons shinin through th' dark as they waded abeaut up to their knees i' slutch.

This mornin everybody went confessin to th' owd vicar, keepin him hard at wark whol noon. Chaps an' women kneel't abeaut for heaurs, waitin their turns to get into th' manager's front reawm, where th' confession coome off. Gomez coome o'er an' went in soon on, gettin through i' tuthri minutes as he'd ne'er done mich o' nowt wrong; an' his wife followed him, lookin very red abeaut th' e'en, as iv hoo'd bin cryin o neet. Toard baggin time th' owd parson co'd to see us, axin in a jokin way heaw it were we'd missed confessin, an' makin hissel very friendly wi us. He's a nice owd chap, but he con talk two roads aw've noticed. He's reet enough wi us, thryin noane ov his blarney; but he comes deawn heavy on some o' these miserable niggers an' Indians, freetenin 'em wi brag abeaut fottin th' slate off an' nobry knows what.

It's bin very cowd neet an' mornin for tuthri week, but we s' warm up again as winther comes nar. God bless Queen Victoria, an' abeaut a score moore English folk aw've bin used to livin wi. Lijah says "Hear, hear!"

September 27.—Fireflees are comin back i' bunches neaw, shinin like a congregation o' tollow candles howdin a camp meetin. We'n sin nowt on 'em whol th' cowd summer weather's bin on. T' facthry's buzzin away neaw. O th' frames are runnin, an' cotton keeps comin as fast as we con use it. Most on it's brought o' mule back, but a bale or two turns up in a bullock cart neaw an' again poo'd bi eight or ten spon o' cattle. We're turnin some good cloth eaut, a dyel betther nor samples we'n sin fro t'other mills reaund abeaut, plenty good enough to ston it corner i' owd Englan. A new spinner started last week. He rode up on a horse wi a black sarvant followin him; i' rayther different style to th' spindle-twirlers at Mitchell Hey or th' Hangin Road. Even th' scutcher felley's abeaut on horseback, an' there's a yollow-skin tentin th' sizin frame as big a dandy as ever crawl't. Lijah's havin most ov

his honds to teighch, an they're o on 'em in a desperate hurry to larn, as onybody met expect fro sich pushin craythers. Some ov his weighvers con manage one loom neaw, an' th' new spinner reckons he con tent a whol side ov a throstle hissel. They could ony on 'em addle hawve-a-creawn a week i' Rachda.

Greight storm yestherday. Hailstones as big as marbles coome through t' facthry slates, an' thunner rowl't fit to shake th' hills deawn. There'd be some moore solid stuff to walk on iv that happen't. Eh! aw wish we were awom.

October 5th.—Aw were walkin past Gomez heause bi chance last neet an' yerd his wife scremin murdher, so beaut ony moore ado aw pept in to see what were up. Mig. were runnin her reaund wi a mule whip, fottin her a nasty slash or two afore aw could stop him. Aw laid howd on him bi th' neck, howdin him whol his tanthrum were o'er, givin th' poor woman time to slip eaut. He wriggl't, scrat, swore, an' splutther't; but aw had him, an' aw kept him whol he'd done.

"Again you!" he snarl't when aw loased him. "How near my house do you? What message sent after my wife before? That your contract completes himself it is soon well."

"Owt else?" aw said, leeting a cigarette; but as he'd finished he marched off i' th' sulks. Iv aw catch him 'busin his wife again he'll get weel cleauted, gaffer or not.

Two month moore an' aw'll be eaut o' this hole. Mi papper's o used up, so aw'll give o'er diary writin. There's nowt mich to put deawn neaw. One day's like another, an' o 's runnin as sweet as hairoil.

Moore letthers fro wom. They're gettin th' brass reet enough neaw it seems. Not a word fro my owd woman, so everything mun be smooth. Hoo'll gi me a warm welcome back—too warm, happen—but wot or cowd there's no shop like Rachda. Iv aw con nobbut smell yon gasworks just once again—Husht! Howd on!

So th' diary's finished at last. Very weel it looks, too, an' th writin shows up some bowdly; for aw write a useful box-label hond, good enough for blint e'en to read. One o' th' lasses has plaited me a honsome back for th' book wi long grase an' fleawer stalks, so that just sets mi wark off. When aw get wom an' hond th' book o'er to th' owd wench hoo'll squint at it, curl her nose, an' say,

"Ah! it's just like thee! Olez wastin thi time o'er some mak o' babbywark! Aw wish tha'd larn to hang thi cap up sometime, astid o' levin it lyin abeaut on t' dhresser this road, upsettin everything i'th' heause!"

Bless her owd heart! Hoo's fond on me afther o, an' me ov her.

What saysta, Lijah? Welly ten o' t' clock? Never, surelee! Comin, owd brid, comin! Keep thi yure on.

VIII.—Throuble for Lijah.

Eighteen hundherd an' eighty-three geet toard it end, olez grooin warmer as it went on. O were runnin smooth an' reglar i' t' facthry, wark were yezzy, pay good, an' yet aw kept gettin moore an' moore miserable every week. Aw dursen't look forrad to another long dhree year i' that place. It 'd ha to be done, aw knew, an' aw should be forced to tackle it bi misel, but aw couldn't bide to think o'er th' job. To be sure everybody were very friendly wi us, an' as far as their leets went did their best to make us comfortable; for o that we fund Portigees an' hawve-breeds poor company for thinkin chaps.

For one thing it were a good job Squire's time were nearly up. There'd olez bin bad blood between him an' Gomez, an' it mended noane as time went on. My mate couldn't howd fro plaguin t' little Portigee whenever he geet a chance, an' chances were plentiful; so t' directhor were olez snappin an' snarlin, Squire nobbut laughin at him.

November were fast gooin when we made it up to ride o'er to th' gowd mine again, for Squire to tak lev ov o th' good friends we had theere.

"For tha knows, Lijah, that's th' only Christian shop we'n let on," he said. "Tha mun slip o'er middlin oft when aw'm gwone, or thi brains 'll goo wrong."

So we started on a fine Sunday mornin, spent a happy day wi th' engineer an' his wife, lookin reaund th' workins, crommed wi tunnels an' waytherwheels, hearkenin th' captain 'liver a first rate sarmon at th' little church, wondherin to find what labbour an' patience were needed to sort an' gether th' gowd when they'd fund it; forced to envy thoose fine cliver fellahs a bit, sattl't theere so comfortable wi their wives an' childher reaund 'em. Th' engineer's little uns took to me rarely, followin me abeaut everywheere wi their pratty babby-talk; never dhremin heaw sore they made mi heart whol aw chatther't an' laughed back. Ah, well!

It's a bonny little valley that village lies in, shut up snug o reaund bi greight broos. Morro Velho myens "Th' Owd Hill"—that is, th' hill where gowd were first delved for, scores o' years back. Mine workins are scatther't up an' deawn th' slopes, huts an' shanties are dotted abeaut, wi a casa grande or big heause for th' captain, an' less heauses for t'other yead men. A busy, pratty little shop, very, though they say'n th' gowd's gettin used up. We went deawn th' mine, an' fund it a reawmy comfortable tunnel enough, propped up bi sich a rook o' pows an' planks as nobry could believe beaut seein. Joiners han summat to do theere, that's plain.

That visit were soon o'er wi—too soon, a weary dyel—an' we were back among th' cotton. So another three week went beaut

owt happenin, an' th' day coome near for Squire to lev me. O his plans were laid, his boxes packed, mules ordher't, horse sowd, friends takken bi th' hond; another neet an' that cheerful companion, that thrusty mate, ud be gwone.

Aw sit i' th' heause, feelin very deawnkest, when Squire ran in wi a letther in his hond.

"Here, owd mon!" he says. "This is physic to breeten that face o' thine. It's just com'n up fro th' post. Catch howd, an' aw'll goo an' slat a partin tear o'er yon musthart-colour't manager afore aw lev him."

Off he went. Aw ripped t' letther open, to find it coome fro mi wife wi bad news. Th' second chilt were deawn wi croup, hoo said, an' t' docthor gav her little hope. "Dear Lijah, do come back! do come back!" t' letther finished up. Poor thing! Hoo forgeet her news ud be a month owd when aw geet it, an' 'at there were no gettin wom i' less nor another month, do as aw would. An' so for owt aw knew or could know mi little lass met be dyead that very minute—ah, an' buried beside; an' as for ony help aw could give her or mi wife aw met as weel ha bin dyead misel.

Neaw, what use were it for me to scrat brass together for t' good o' mi childher, iv aw were to loise 'em that road? Mi little bonny Lucy! Mi dear, dear, darlin chilt, left nobbut tuthri month sin' wi a smile an' a kiss; lost neaw for ever. Heaw could mi wife live through it? What greedy, graspin, devilish sperrit had sent me o'er th' say, when mi reet place should ha bin awom to watch an' comfort thoose aw loved so thrue, so deep, so far aboon misel? Mi chilt were dyead—aw felt sure hoo were dyead —summat towd me this were a punishment for levin o aw loved helpless bi theirsel, to risk mi life an' waste mi time scrapin up bits o' dirty gowd. God help o awom! Aw could do nowt nobbut fret misel, stick to mi wark, an' howd up like a mon.

Squire coome back in a while to find mi yead deawn on th' table an' wot tears runnin. He wapped in wi some mak o' jokin talk ready on his tongue, but put it by beaut usin for once, sit him deawn on th' kist beside me an' said very soft, "What's to do, owd mon? Iv tha'rt frettin so mich at loisin me aw'll stop t'other year eaut."

Aw put t' letther in his hond, an' he read it twice through in a whisper.

"Nay!" he said dhirectly, puttin his arm o'er mi shooldher, an' gripin mi hond tight wi his; "that con ne'er be so! God's noane beaun to punish thee that road; aw know betther. Iv it'd bin me, or ony sich carless good-for-nowt, one met have undherstood it. Thee keep thi heart up, an' see iv there isn't another letther next week wi betther news. Aw'll put off gooin—aw cawn't lev thee this road."

"Yigh, tha mun goo," aw said. "Tha's o ready an' yor folk 'll be expectin thee. It's nobbut settin mi teeth an' howdin mi patience tuthri month longer, hopin there'll be no moore on 'em deein afore we con meet. As for Lucy, aw've gien her up. Hoo'll pray for me no moore."

"Lijah, we'n bin good mates, hannot we?" Squire went on, squeezin mi hond like a vice. "Keep thi heart up, lad, an' it'll o come reet tha'll see. Tha knows aw love thee, but whether aw did or not aw couldn't turn mi back on a Rachda chap left i' this pickle. It wouldn't be jannock. Aw cawn't manage thy wark, or aw'd stop an' tha should goo; but iv aw lev thee just neaw aw'll be brokken up for scrap iron. So neaw tha knows."

He stuck to his text, spite ov owt aw could think on to persuade him, an' stopped another fortnit, ridin o'er to Sabara three times to see iv t' letther had com'n. Nowt coome. O that weary while aw'd to suffer i' ignorance, an' yet aw felt sure mi wife mut ha written. Aw began wondherin iv Gomez had bin at his thricks again; so next time he coome into th' mill aw said to him,

"Han yo sin owt ov a letther for me? Aw've bin expectin one o week."

"No, no, Mister Lijah; no, no, no. A lettare is not."

"Are yo sure?" aw axed again. "A matther o' life or dyeath hangs on it. Iv there's a letther com'n for God's sake dunnot howd it back! Aw'll tarry mi time eaut iv aw live; yo'n no need to be freeten't."

He chang't colour as aw looked hard at him, but stuck to it yet there were noane, so aw were forced to tak his word.

Next day were Sunday, an' we set off to th' post-office i' good time, Squire thryin hard to cheer me up as we went. Th' owd postmaisther were in for a wondher, an' aw axed him wi a chawkin throat iv he'd owt for me. Oh, ah! he towd us, carless an' offhond, he'd had a letther two days, but as it were o'erweight couldn't 'liver it whol we paid him four hundherd reis (tenpence).

Aw ripped t' letther eaut ov his honds an' rove it oppen. Squire cobbed a shillin deawn, swearin at th' fellah for his stupid ways, an' tellin him he'd wring his neck iv ever owt o' th' sort happen't again.

Good news this time! Lucy mendin nicely, an' weel enough to send her love to her fayther. Mi e'en swam; aw rowl't o'er again Squire.

"Yeads up, sodiers!" he sheauted, howdin me fast. "Things are lookin betther aw see. Steady, owd breek! Aw towd thee, didn't aw! Dal thee an' thi tenpence, tha musthart blossom! We'd ha gien ten peaund for this."

There were no howdin Squire afther sich good news. He poo'd me into th' store an' stood two bottles ov English ale 'at cost him five shillin, an' were noane so exthra good afther o, th' vowage

havin spoil't 'em a bit, sheautin, dancin, an' knockin niggers abeaut like a crazy un. Aw were busy talkin to a chap fro Rio when sich a clamour were yeard eautside as nobry could believe, an' we looked eaut to find Squire at th' bottom on it. He'd two niggers, one i' ayther hond, an' he were jowin their yeads together, puncin 'em, an' roarin wi laughin; abeaut forty natives skrikin o reaund, but keepin a good arm's length eaut ov his reighch. Aw co'd on him, so he coome up, wipin his sweatin face an' tellin us he'd bin thryin to teighch 'em foot an' horseshoe, but they were too idle to larn.

Aw felt middlin excited mysel, yo may be sure; but as it's my road to show no moore nor aw'm forced o' what's stirrin mi mind, excitement olez helps to keep me quiet. Iv aw made no fuss aw were noane wantin i' thankful feelins, an' aw didn't forget to kneel deawn that neet to lay mi thoughts afore Him 'at 'd kept me safe so long i' that wild counthry, an' myent yet, as aw hoped, to carry me safe back to mi pined-for wom.

Well, there were nowt to keep Squire neaw, so in a day or two he bowted toard Rio, everybody obbut Gomez feelin sorry to loise him; an' neaw aw'd twelve lonesome month to face like a mon. Some on yo may happen think me moore woman nor mon, wi o th' cryin an' frettin aw've owned to, but ne'er mind! Aw hope noane on yo'll ever be thried same as aw were.

Aw took to ridin abeaut at every chance, neaw, givin mi friends no oppenin to charge me wi neglectin 'em. Every Sunday seed me off one road or another; every saint-day (an' there's a rare lot theere, everyone on 'em holidays) were filled up th' same road; so afore long aw geet a good knowledge o' t' counthry, an' rode abeaut as independent as a native.

Mitchell coome up one Sunday to thry me again wi offers ov a good shop undher him, tellin me he'd stopped Squire on his road wom but missed keepin him.

"Yo'll miss me, too," aw said. "Wom aw mun goo as soon as ever mi time's up, an' iv aw come eaut ony moore mi family mun come too."

Well, that'd shuit him weel enough, he said, an' promised to see me again toard th' year end, when aw'd had time to turn it o'er. He did see me on mi road deawn, but met as weel ha whistl't as thried to hindher me.

Mi favouryte visitin shops were Sabara an' Morro Velho. At th' first there were olez a bit o' news stirrin, an' mostly a fresh face or two to see; at t'other aw ne'er missed gettin a gradely English welcome, an' comfort for mi wartchin heart.

Sabara's a curious shop, raythe r. It stons on th' Velhas river, an' that joins th' San Francisco, a bit ov a brook as near two theausan mile long as makes no matther. A fine meauntain co'd

th' Sierra da Piedada stons behinnd th' teawn, settin it off rarely, an' there's plenty moore broos abeaut ov a rayther less breed. They were expectin gettin t' railroad oppen't through to Rio that year, so it'll be yezzy enough neaw to slip up theere fro th' say. Tuthri generation moore an' there'll be plenty o' pushin Englishmen upo' that clod, wakkenin th' sleepy Portigees up, an' makin some use o' th' rich soil 'at's laid idle so long.

Once, folk say'n, Sabara had fifty theausan humans in it, o busy seechin gowd; an' there's some ancient ruins, brokken-deawn huts, an' tunnels plain to be sin yet where th' owd mines were oppen't eaut. Iv there's three theausan folk theere neaw it'll be as mich, an' yo may rake o th' dirt wi a smo-tooth comm beaut findin gowd enough to gild a pin-yead. There's some very grand stone carvin on th' Catholic church theere, done bi a chap beaut arms—or wi nowt but shooldhers an' elbows, shuzheaw. He were quite a noted characther i' Minas province, an' there's plenty ov his rare chisellin up an' deawn. He used to get a mallet an' chisel sthrapped onto th' stumps ov his arms, an' then he were reet. They don't gild their choice stone-cuttin theere, same as aw've sin done in a teawn aw lived in once.

Aw fund mi road to th' greight St. John gowd mine one Sunday, findin some moore Englishmen i' charge, an' gettin as warm a welcome as mon could have. Another day aw geet to Cuiba, havin th' river to cross abeaut a dozen times to shap it. That's another minin village, o' th' same stamp as o on 'em.

So we crawl't reaund th' corner o' Kesmas, as wot a day as we'd felt at ony part o' th' year, havin no disturbance fro carol singers, left th' owd year behinnd us an' geet weel into th' yollow fayver time. That year th' complaint were very bad at Rio whol toard th' end ov April, an' though we'd nowt mich to be freeten't on up i' th' hills there were summat flyin abeaut i' th' air different to common. Aw fund mysel gettin heavy an' sleepified, wark feelin sich a throuble 'at aw could hardly bring mi mind to it. Mi appetite went, too, for th' first time sin levin England; but aw'd a dhruft on me for a day or two 'at nowt could sleck. One neet mi pulse set off full gallop, bangin away like a engine piston wi th' governors brokken, mi skin were brunt dhry an' wot, mi e'en badly bloodshot, an' aw rowl't groanin o neet beaut a wink o' sleep. Aw'd plenty o' nurses next mornin, Gomez wife particlar doin what hoo could to yez me, but heaw aw missed mi own wife an' kin con never be towd. Afore so long aw went off mi yead otogether, ravin abeaut Alice an' mi little Lucy, an' frettin o'er bein foo enough to lev 'em. Noane on 'em abeaut me thought aw could poo through again. T' docthor wagged his grey yead, sniffed at his smellin bottle, an' gav me up; th' owd vicar were sent for fro Sabara to pray o'er me; everything were ready for

sidin me off, an' yet, some road or another, aw wouldn't dee. When th' fire were gwone fro mi blood an' mi candle should ha gwone eaut through wakeness it would keep on brunnin; an' afther o t' throuble aw'd gien folk aw ne'er dee'd at th' finish.

IX.—Englan, Squire, an' Beauty.

Aw fund mysel again at last, flat i' bed, wondherin where aw'd bin an' whether aw were Lijah or somebody else. That could ne'er be Lijah's arm, surelee—that thin, white object, no bigger nor a pickin-rod hardly; but it felt heavy, too, thin or thick, an' took some heighvin up. What face were that—sthrong, monly, breawnish-red, whisker-fringed—lookin deawn on th' poor sickly figure sthretched on th' bed? Where had aw sin it afore?

"Why!" aw said, in a faint whisper, o th' bit o' voice aw could find; "why! tha'rt Billy Greenhalgh fro Marlan."

"Praise the Lord!" Greenhalgh sung eaut, rubbin his e'en. "He's getten his wits back, aw do believe! Lijah, owd mon, heaw arta feelin?"

"Nay! aw con feel mich o' nowt. This is noane o' me, is it? What's bin to do?"

"Tha's bin off on a bit ov a thrip—noane a chep un, noather. Well! it's a leetenin to yer thee talkin sense again, owd brid. Tha's bin nobbut wildish this day or so. Aw were ill freeten't we'd sin t' last on thee, but tha'rt for chetin th' saxton, aw con see."

"Aw'm some fain tha'rt here, Billy. It's a greight comfort to have one o' mi own breed on th' spot at a time like this. Hasta bin here long?"

"Above a week. Aw coome expectin to find Squire wi thee, but he's off it seems. Tha were nobbut just wick then, an' brunt up wi fayver, so aw were like to see th' job through."

"An' neaw aw've disappointed thee at th' finish."

"Some ill!" th' Marlanite says, his e'en twinklin. "Aw myent seein th' sods laid on thi yead. Gomez geet a grave delved eaut ready for thee, an' between thee and me it's my opinion tha'd ha bin at th' bottom on it neaw iv aw hadn't happen't to come. Tha lee nearly hawve a day like a dyead un, an' tha knows heaw carless these imps are. They'd ha buried thee that neet iv aw'd letten 'em."

"Aw've moore to thank thee for nor aw thought on then. Aw hope nobry's sent word to mi wife. Iv hoo gets to know hoo'll goo crazy, poor thing!"

"Oh nowe, there's bin nowt said. Aw did think o' writin once, but it's no use freetenin th' women, tha knows. There's a letther fro thi missis bin waitin a day or two."

He fot it in, howdin th' papper up to mi e'en, as mi own shakin honds were no use, an' aw read it o through, feelin it were betther

nor physic. O were smooth an' sthraight awom. Lucy were weel again, mi wages had bin sent reglar as they fell due, mi wife hersel had good health, an' looked forrad wi patience to th' end o' mi thravels, Squire had londed back, stuffin 'em up wi o maks o' fine tales abeaut t' counthry an' th' pleasur o' livin in it—tellin ony lie he thought on to yez their minds, aw could see; mi owdest lad had takken a prize at th' science class, an' it nobbut wanted me awom to make 'em o happy. Awom! Ah! aw'd bin nar wom nor mi dear lass knew on.

There were a general rush in to see me when news flew reaund 'at aw'd getten like mysel again. T' facthry stopped for hawve an' heaur or so, an' everybody i' th' neighbourhood coome havin a peep. There'd bin some sport whol aw'd bin laid up, seeminly. Th' manager towd me three chaps had bin practisin cardin, getten their fingers catched one afther another, an' turn't th' job up disgusted. Nobry but "Sir Lijah" could run sich a terrible machine as that, they o thought, so t' sooner aw could get back an' t' betther.

It took a long while afore aw gated feelin like misel again. When Greenhalgh had gwone weeks an' months crawl't past o alike, wi nowt to breighk up their dyead level, whol th' summer were gettin o'er an' th' end o' mi slavery comin weel i' seet; an' yet aw nobbut felt wake an' sickly. One Sunday aw rode o'er to Morro Velho to find 'at a young Englishman were lyin dyead wi th' fayver. Aw'd known him weel, an' his wife too. They'd a little cottage o' their own, an' aw'd envied 'em their shop mony a time, tellin 'em heaw aw suffer't wi bein so long divided fro mi own wife and childher, an' gettin mony a kind word o' comfort. Who con tell what lies afore him! Less nor a short month back aw'd sin that young chap alive, hearty, happy, lookin forrad to savin brass enough to get back to th' owd island wi. Neaw he lee cowd an' still; his heart-brokken wife sittin at his bedside wi a look on her face 'at made moore nor one sthrong chap run eaut wi wot tears rowlin deawn his cheeks that day. An' aw'd bin envyin their comforts an' their happy wom!

August went, bringin thoughts o' Rushbearin time, September followed, then October. Nobbut six week neaw to th' end o' mi throubles. Could that be thrue! It were hard to believe, but t' calendhar showed it. Mi taydious job were beaun to turn eaut reet afther o, an' soon on i'th' new year aw met rezonably look for o mi throubles bein past.

Gomez an' his wife had getten on wur an' wur latly. He'd getten so used to hommerin th' poor woman 'at he could hardly howd a day beaut cleautin her, slashin at her wi his whip, or summat. Hoo coome to me a time or two, axin me to tak her part; heawever, aw wouldn't meddle, knowin weel enough aw should nobbut make wur mischief between 'em. Iv it'd bin Squire

hoo'd axed he'd ha thought nowt o' leatherin Gomez weel, carless whether he geet secked or not, ne'er botherin his yead abeaut what met come on it; an' iv aw could ha felt satisfied 'at th' poor woman wouldn't ha to suffer for it, aw'd ha punced th' little heaunt a bit mysel.

Aw co'd to see th' owd vicar o' Sabara one Sunday, tellin him heaw things were gooin on; but he knew moore nor aw could tell him, an' nobbut said they mut feight it eaut between 'em, as he wouldn't meddle. Aw towd him plain enough 'at Gomez were a bad lot, noane fit to be a gaffer nor to be thrusted wi a wife i' that lonely spot; but o th' owd chap said were,

"Where the ants gather together there comes the tapir also," an' looked as iv he thought that wise sayin sattl't o th' job. Happen it did, but it made things no betther for Gomez wife.

So we crawl't on into December—time for me to start shappin for wom. Aw made mi last reaund o' visits, takkin lev o' moore nor one warm friend, carryin bits o' presents for their relations i' Englan, sellin off what tackle aw didn't want an' packin up what aw did, stonnin a native rum an' orange-lev tay baggin for mi mates at Mazyteawn, an' gettin ready i' general. Some o' th' honds reckon't they'd miss me gradely ill, an' coome yeawlin to mi front dur wi tuthri stuffed hummin birds, choice yarbs, an' artificial fleawers made fro fithers, a dodge these natives are very cliver at.

Wi everything ready for a bowd start next mornin aw went to bed for th' last time i' Mazyteawn. A grand neet it were, wi th' moon shinin as it seldom does, for there's very little moonleet i' thoose regions. Aw'd getten middlin weel used to th' place; an' fain as aw were to have th' chance o' levin it aw like felt rayther a pang at gooin. Sich quare craythers folk are! Summer were at th' height, an' as aw pept through mi little window o th' ronk beauty o' branch an' plant showed itsel i' th' white leet, an' mi e'en ran o'er th' swellin hills up to th' black line o' meauntains fur away. Buzz-z-z-z went mony a million winged little objects, keepin up a steady hum neet an' day, brokken neaw an' again bi brid-squalls, or yeawls fro four-legged varmint ov o disagreeable maks. O'eryead a deep blue-black sky, wi not a cleaud to be sin; for t' dhry season were on when rain's as scace as diamonds—or moore so, for they keepen findin tuthri o' thoose things a bit fur north.

Weary o' gawpin at last an' pantin wi th' wot neet air, like a dhraught fro a baker's oon, aw geet into bed an' fell asleep. Abeaut three o' t' clock summat wakken't me again. Th' moon had gwone then—it were pitch dark. Aw rowl't o'er once, an' were just dhroppin off when aw yerd a bit ov a noise i' t'other reawm; an' lyin still, afore so long th' dur oppen't to let in honest Gomez carryin a shaded candle in his hond. He went sthraight to my clooas, hangin o'er a cheer, an' rommed a skinny hond into

a breeches pocket. Afore he could get it eaut again aw'd howd on him, an' aw gav him sich a twiltin wi th' stock ov a mule-whip lyin hondy as made him reet for sore bwons for mony a day to come. He'd popped his leet eaut an' kept his meauth shut, thinkin aw shouldn't know him i' th' dark; but he were rayther too lat theere, as th' flown poll-parrot said to Jarvis when he went a-catchin it on th' slate. Aw lurried him through th' kitchen, cobbed him eaut beaut sayin a word to him, festen't mi dur, an' shapped to bed again. Iv o burglars could be sarved th' same there'd soon be an end o' their job.

Aw seed through t' little rogue's dodge yezzy enough. Aw'd a dyel o' brass i' th' heause, for aw'd sent noane wom latly, bein so near gooin mysel, an' th' heaunt had thought to save me t' throuble o' carryin so mich weight. Where he'd expected to find mi gowd aw don't know, but it were hud in a safe nook, where aw were freeten't o' nobry findin it. Aw couldn't help chucklin o'er th' job, as he'd gien me sich a rare chance o' payin mi grudge off on his ribs, an' so finishin mi wark gradely afore levin him. Aw walked o'er to have a last look at him next mornin, but he sent word he were fast i' bed wi rheumatics, an' hoped Sir Lijah met have a good vowage, followin his road safe afther afore, an' gettin weel forrad behinnd, or some sich gibberidge; so aw bother't no fur afther him, knowin weel enough it were no use.

Off at last! Sabara once again, a weary thrail deawn to Carandahy, an' so on bi railroad to Rio. Two days theere, eightin mi fingers wi impatience, an' off we went across th' say; gettin some roughish weather an' one heavy storm, but carin nowt abeaut it.

A cowd snowy Jenuary day seed us creepin up th' Mersey into Liverpool. Who but Squire should be on th' londin-stage as we dhrew up, an' who were that young woman wi him, sthretchin her arms toard me? My Alice—white an' thremblin, thin an' worn, but wick, weel, hearty, lovin as ever! Five minutes moore an' mi arms were reaund her, an' hoo were dhroppin happy tears deawn mi clen-starched dickey.

"It's poo'd thee deawn a bit, owd un," Squire says, stickin his thumbs in his singlet sleeves, an' walkin reaund to look at me fro o sides; an' he were reet, for aw'd ne'er getten mi sthrength sin th' fayver floor't me. "Hast bin ill or summat?"

"Just a bit," aw said, winkin at him to keep quiet afore mi wife. "Nowt woth botherin abeaut. When arta for gooin back, Squire? There's bin a dyel o' sperrin for thee."

"Howd thi din," he said, grinnin. "Tha'll yer nowt o' me gooin back whol t' Roch runs wi clear wayther an' Breawn Wardle dhrops into Hollinoth. It's no job for soft-hearted chaps like thee an' me, 'at cawn't bide to be rovven off th' owd clod. Iv ever aw

thravel fur nor Blackpool again aw desarve to be worried wi crickets."

"Three inch long," aw put in.

"Dhrot thee, Lijah!" Squire grunted, givin me a shake wi his sthrong arm. "Tha'rt like as tha could ne'er believe me abeaut that job. Sithee!

> Is that finger weet? Is that finger dhry?
> May aw ne'er dee i' bed iv aw've towd thee a lie."

"Well, come on," aw said. "Rachda for ever! We're safe i' owd Englan again, thank God! So here's th' end o' th' wondherful thravels o' Squire an' Lijah, an' may we ne'er be no wur off nor we are neaw."

"Amen!" Squire says; "but iv ever tha mentions that cricket again yor Ailse con start bakin th' curran loave for thi buryin. So neaw tha knows."

LIJAH'S FORTIN.

I.—Unsattl't.

Yo'll recollect me sayin, when aw londed back i' owd England afther mi first Merica thrip, 'at nowt should persuade me ever to cross that weary width ov ocean again—noather brass, nor wark, roosin nor flytin, friendship nor love.

But we're changeable folk i' this world, an' it's seldom safe for a mon to look twelve month afore him, to say nowt o' four year. Aw went back, spite ov o mi talk; an' this is th' histhory o' what aw went for, an' heaw, wi a short description o' mi comin wom once moore to this little island, where aw'm booked to stop neaw, whether aw like it or not, as long as mi name's Lijah Garside.

What a quare thing it is i' this blintfowd life we're forced to live 'at no object sthriven for looks woth owt afther it's won! Folk are like olez climbin hill-sides, thinkin iv they con nobbut just once get fair on th' top they'll ne'er ha nowt moore to do nobbut sit sthroddle-legged across it, findin everything reet. Let 'em lond once at th' point they're aimin for, an' what happens then? A sthretch o' cowd hungry-lookin wildherness lies afore 'em, wi moore hills risin on th' fur side; or iv it's th' topmost meauntain th' poor pilgrims han tackl't their case is wur again, for there's nowt to be done then nobbut gawp down at th' world they'n left, an' slutther toard it again as soon as con be respectably shapped.

Aw'd thought once ov a day 'at iv aw could just manage to get mi childher schoo-larn't, an' started off a fair mark for their race through th' world, aw could sattle deawn quietly o mi life, botherin mi yead abeaut nowt no moore; but when aw geet back fro Rio wi mi pockets full o' gowd—o mi fancies come thrue, every hope reighched—an' th' sattlin-deawn time should ha com'n, aw fund misel as fur off content as ever.

Mi childher provided for, as one met say, iv puttin 'em into a fair road for addlin their own livins con be co'd providin, aw'd time to considher mi own case, an' study heaw th' comin years were likely to hondle me. That study were noane o'er an' above pleasant. So long as aw kept on wortchin things were likely to be reet enough; but aw were beginnin to deaubt whether too mich wark wouldn't be throublesome or not, an' to wish for some prospect ov a time when mi labbour met come to a creditable end beaut me havin to dee first.

Aw'd three hundherd peaund invested i' cotton shares, an' met have had moore but for mi wife an' childher thinkin we should fancy eaursel a bit becose we'd getten weel off, an' puttin th' livin expenses on a bigger scale i' consequence. Aw never blamed nor hindhered their ideas, for th' gowd had bin getten chiefly for their comfort an' benefit, an' aw should ha bin a foo to lock it up where nobry could have ony good fro it.

Neaw three hundherd peaund looks a lot, but it's hardly enough to retire on; so as months went past aw kept sweighin reaund little bi little to th' belief 'at wisdom pointed me again to th' fleawery lond where a white mon's brains an' muscle fot sich a hee market price. Fro thinkin this o'er bi misel aw started talkin to other folk abeaut it; an' th' longer aw talked th' moore determin't aw grew to thry mi luck a second time. Squire gav me smo encouragement. He'd takken a machine shop, an' started i' business for hissel wi th' brass he'd made abrode; an' he were doin so weel 'at he'd very near gien o'er wortchin at th' bench; payin other folk astid, as he said, to addle his livin for him.

Aw co'd to see him one neet, an' we'd a long crack abeaut th' business. He'd flitted fro his owd cottage into a new heause wi a bow-window an' front garden, an' some comfortable th' owd brid made bwoth hissel an' his wife. A sarvant lass coome to th' dur when aw knocked, showin me forrad into a weel-fitted pahlour, where Squire sit in his shirt sleeves smookin just sich another short clay as he'd carried on his thravels. Mrs. Marcroft, donned i' black silk, were sittin bi th' window, takkin stock ov everything 'at passed eautside.

"Dar aw come in, Squire?" aw said. "Are common folk alleawed among o this finery?"

"Sit thee deawn an' howd thi din," Squire said. "Whol aw've a stoo to ceawer on tha'll be welcome to th' hawve on't, whether it's rough pine or polished mahogany."

"Where mun aw sit, then?" his wife simper't, spreadin her frock in a ladylike style.

"Tha mun pyerch on mi knee—that is iv tha behaves thisel," Squire said, sthrikin a match on his rough thumbnail. "Hasta nowt to say to Lijah neaw he's co'd a seein us?"

"I am plez't to meet you, Misther Garside," th' wife says, comin forrad an' givin me her hond wi greight state. "You will p'raps excuse the drawin-room bein so mich upset. I gave our servant particlar orders to clen it up, but hoo were too busy."

"Never apologise for that, missis," aw said. "Aw ne'er noticed it. Are yo keepin middlin?"

"I am bothered with indisgestion very bad. How is your good wife?"

"Yo'n just kessen't her reet this time," aw said. "A good wife hoo is, an' olez were. Hoo's healthy an' weel for what aw know."

"You must send her deawn here some day. Hoo will be fain to look through my house, p'raps. The chambers is very handsome, and we have a pratty view as you enter out at the back. It's cellared back an' front."

"Well, aw'll tell her."

"Squire, I feel fair shamed to see you smooke that clay pipe when you have a genteel meerschaum lyin on that cornish. It looks so!"

"Does it?" Squire axed. "Well, we con soon awther that."

He took th' meerschaum deawn, set it undher his foot, an' crushed it as flat as a poncake.

"Eh, tha greight nasty, dirty thing!" his wife skriked, flyin into a rivin passion an' forgettin o abeaut her fine talk. "Did ever onybody see sich a thrick as that! Arta gooin off thi mind? A fifteen-shillin pipe brokken to bits, an' o that mess on th' new yeld rug! Aw'm sure no woman ever had to feight wi sich throubles as me!"

Her passion melted into a cryin fit, an' hoo stood sobbin wi her appron to her e'en.

"When tha's finished tha con goo," Squire said, quiet but firm. "Aw hope this may be a lesson to thee, Susan, an' aw nobbut wish thi foolish airs could be squozzen eaut on thee as yezzy as this bit o' soft stone's bin flatten't. Iv thi spare brass an' fine foldherdols are nobbut beaun to make thee stuck up, or set thee crowin o'er owd an' weel-thried friends, aw'll flit into a two-reawmed cottage again, an' make thee live on a peaund a week. So neaw tha knows."

Mrs. Marcroft went eaut wi a dyel o' sniffin, bangin t' dur afther her. Aw looked at mi owd mate, he looked at me, an' we undherstood one another beaut ony talkin.

"Hoo'll get o'er this nonsense," Squire said in a bit. "Th' brass has like turn't her yead rayther, but hoo's seaund at th' heart is Susan. Hoo'll get o'er it. What hast fresh, Lijah?"

"Aw've co'd to see iv tha'll keep me company to Rio again."

Squire leighn't him back in his cheer, laughin wi o t' depth ov his lungs.

"Tha never says! Eh, thoose were happy days, werenot they! When a chap's weel an' hearty, wi no brass to bother him, nowt to do but just shove a hommer an' screw-keigh into his pocket an' set his feet across th' world, what else should he need to make him content? Nowt, Lijah! Nowt! Tha'rt noane sayrious abeaut gooin back, arta?"

"Sayrious as a judge."

"Or a cowd chisel. Tha looks it, too. Arta pinin to see owd Mig. again?"

Cornish, cornice. *Yeld*, healed.

"Nowe, aw'll thry a different shop this time."

Squire poo'd a bell-knob at his elbow, bringin th' sarvant up in a crack.

"Get us some ale up, mi lass."

"Please, sir, missis has locked the cellar door and gone out with the key."

"Is that so?" says Squire, wi a chuckle. "Come on, lass, an' bring a pitcher."

He marched off into th' kitchen, an' next minute aw yerd a greight thunge an' bang 'at made o th' heause rock, wi a crash o' splintherin wood. Then Squire coome back wi th' cellar dur in his hond, balanced it on th' piano top, an' sit him deawn again.

"Hoo'll see it theere," he said, leetin his pipe.

Th' sarvant coome in wi a pitcher an' some glasses, lookin ill freeten't, so t' maisther towd her to be shappin off to bed, as there were likely to be a row afore long, an' aw began to think aw'd betther be stirrin off misel whol a road stood oppen.

"Aw'll tell thee what it is, Lijah," Squire said, when he'd burl't eaut an' we'd sampl't his ale; "my opinion is tha'rt beaun off a-seechin brass."

"To be sure. There's a fortin to be made across yon wayther."

"Hearken to me, neaw, an' tak advice when it's chep. Thee stop awom. Tha's gowd enough for ony rezonable wants, iv tha gets moore it'll nobbut be a throuble to thee, there's everything to risk an' nowt woth winnin. Stop awom."

"Nay, aw'll thry mi luck once again."

"Lijah, tha mun think betther on it. Hasta forgetten so soon heaw miserable we felt away fro owd Englan, an' heaw we suffer't for want o' butthercakes? Tha mun go noane."

"Ah, but aw'm beaun to tak mi family this time. When we're theere together life 'll be different to what it were afore."

"O th' odds are dyead again this business turnin eaut weel," Squire says, scrattin his yead. "We'n gwone through it once, an' bin lucky—let's be thankful an' sattle deawn. Tha'll ne'er do betther nor tha'rt doin neaw, whatever side o' th' say tha flies to. Thee stop awom. It's for thi own good aw'm tellin thee. Stop awom!"

Aw shook mi yead. Just then we yerd a screm in th' kitchen, an' th' missis coome runnin into th' reawm like somebry wild; shawl on, bonnet in her hond.

"Somebry's brokken into th' cellar! There's bin thieves in! Heaw is it yo'n ne'er yerd 'em? Thieves! Thieves! Help!"

We sit still, sayin nowt, whol th' excited woman rambl't on.

"They'n ta'en th' dur fair off it hinges! Yo mun ha yerd 'em! There's no tellin heaw mich they'n stown! Get up, tha greight idle thing, an' look!"

"Go deawn an' fill this pot again," Squire said quietly, howdin

th' pitcher toard her. "Aw've put th' cellar dur on th' piano theere, as aw fund it raythor i' mi road."

Susan skriked, dhropped into a cheer, an' looked fleyed eaut ov her wits.

"Tak this pot an' fill it," Squire said again.

Mrs. Marcroft tee'd her bonnet on an' geet up.

"Aw'll go wom to mi mother. Aw'll live no longer wi sich a chap as thee."

"Say two words moore an' tha shall goo," Squire said, bangin his big neighve on th' table top. "That worn-eaut mouldy tale's bin cobbed i' mi teeth oft enough. Aw've letten thee goo on wi thi foolish ways thinkin tha'd surelee larn wit some day, but astid o' mendin tha'rt makin bwoth thisel an' me into laughin-stocks. Aw'll end this nonsense. Fill that pitcher."

Hoo stood still, never awsin to heed him, but lookin freeten't.

"Aw don't want to lay a finger on thee beaut aw'm forced," Squire went on, "but it's thee or me for it neaw, an' aw'm beaun to be maisther in mi own heause. Fill that pot, or aw'll turn thee eaut an' lock thee eaut; an' iv aw'm once dhriven to that length aw'll ne'er tak thee back no moore. Aw'll sell up an' go wi Lijah o'er th' say again. So neaw tha knows."

Susan took th' pitcher beaut a word, went into th' cellar wi it, brought it back full ov ale, set it deawn at Squire's elbow, an' went sthraight upstairs to bed. Squire winked at me, let his pipe, burl't eaut, an' said,

"Aw've a good oppenin for a partner wi a yead on. Put a hundherd peaund into my business an' we'll wortch it together on hawve shares."

Aw stared at him. This were a chance aw'd ne'er looked for, summat weel woth takkin; an' yet aw couldn't get shut o' mi cravin to goo abrode.

"Nowe!" aw towd him at last, when he'd said o he could to persuade me. "Nowe! Aw cawn't sattle i' Englan no longer. Aw'll sail off an' make mi fortin."

Squire grunted. "It's no use puttin hurdles reaund a jumpin horse. Go thi ways."

So aw went.

II.—Tom Speighks Up.

Aw'd gi'en mi wife an' childher tuthri odd hints abeaut crossin th' say again; so neaw when aw towd 'em mi mind were made up, an' they mut o get their boxes packed, they were little surprised. Aw'd no throuble i' findin plenty o' jobs to go to, mi past experience o' Brazil helpin to get me some good offers; an' when, afther studyin enough, aw picked eaut a place near civilised parts, where

thram-lines an' English neighbours were to be fund, it looked as iv nowt could stop us fro bein comfortable an' doin weel.

"Aw'm freeten't tha'rt gettin too fond o' brass, Lijah," mi wife said one neet; but hoo ne'er objected to gooin, seein aw'd set mi heart on it.

That sayin sthruck wom. Were there owt in it? aw kept axin misel. Likely enough there met be, for to be sure mi notions had awther't a lot in th' last ten year. Surelee aw were noane beaun to turn eaut a miser in mi owd age! At ony rate it were noane otogether for misel aw wanted to addle brass, becose aw thought moore o' th' comfort o' thoose belongin to me nor abeaut mi own.

Mi owdest lad had getten to be eighteen, an' begun to feel hissel a mon. In abeaut a week afther he knew aw myent flittin he oppen't his mind to me, as aw've olez encouraged o mi childher to do.

"Aw've bin thinkin this job o'er, fayther," he said, "but aw cawn't quite see mi road plain."

Tom were a good scholar, wi a whol hondful o' technical an' science certificates, but he olez used th' owd Rachda talk awom, so as to keep i' th' fashion.

"What's botherin thee, mi lad?"

"Aw'd sooner stop here, aw think. There's nowt to hindher me fro bein a manager i' tuthri year."

"Nowt at o, my lad; for aw've eddicated an' brought thee up wi a careful e'e to that very end. Practical experience is o tha'rt short on, an' tha'll get that bi wortchin undher me a year or two—nowheere betther. Tha'll find a different style o' doin things on t'other side, too; becose a chap cawn't expect to get every tool an' frame ready to his hond theere, so he's to use his wits, invent bits o' quirks, an' larn to depend on hissel."

"Let me stop here, fayther. Aw've a good enough chance o' doin weel."

"There's betther oppenins in America, wi moore pay at th' end on 'em. An' what abeaut thi mother, Tom? Hoo could ne'er be satisfied to lev thee."

"Aw know hoo'd feel hurt at first; but iv hoo were persuaded it'd be for mi good to stop hoo'd agree. Yo were off a good while yorsel, but we o lived through it, an' everything coome reet again."

"Oh, be hanged!" aw said. "Tha'rt gettin too cliver at argeyments. Come wi us, mi lad. We're o too fond on thee to dhrem o' levin thee behinnd. Come for a couple o' year, shuz-heaw, an' come back again then iv tha gets wom-sick."

"There's summat else, fayther," Tom says, stuttin an' colourin up. "Aw've bin thinkin ov axin a young woman to keep company wi me."

"There's plenty ov honsome lasses across yon brode wayther. Goo an' look at 'em afore tha chooses."

"It's no use," Tom said, shakin his thoughtful noddle. "Aw know one 'at 'll shuit me, an' aw cawn't believe th' seet ov a theausan could change mi mind."

"Is hoo sich a beauty as o that."

"It's noane beauty otogether," th' lad went on, stuttin no moore neaw, "though hoo's noane beaut. Aw cawn't tell heaw it is—but there's like a summat some road, an' sich a look in her e'en as aw've ne'er sin nowheere else. There's summat tells me yon's th' lass aw mun have, or dee miserable afore long."

"Oh, tha'rt booked!" aw said, laughin at him. "Tha's getten o th' symptoms ov a bad attack, an' makes me think abeaut mi own young days when aw went danglin afther thi mother. Who is it?"

"Her name's Emma."

"An' what else? No deaubt that's th' only name tha'rt intherested in, but hoo should have another, surelee."

"It's Crowther. Her fayther's a mechanic—he's foreman neaw for Squire Marcroft."

"What, is it one ov owd Bob lasses tha'rt for havin? They're a dacent family—tha met do wur happen. But heaw iv hoo doesn't fancy thee for a sweetheart?"

"Aw think hoo will," says Tom, wi a sly little grin.

"Why, tha young scamp," aw said, "yo'n made it up aw con see! Bring her to her baggin next Sunday, an' we'll make a shappin o' some mak."

So Tom thanked me, an' bowted off weel satisfied wi hissel.

What wi buyin goods, partin fro relations, an' squarin up a theausan odds an' ends o' business, time went past whol th' sailin day; findin us ready to start, heawever, when th' heaur coome. Tom had sattl't to go wi us, afther aw'd pointed eaut to him an' his sweetheart what advantages he'd get bi thryin his luck abrode. It looked a pity to part 'em, too, poor young things! Love made 'em carless ov everything but stickin together, an' it took a dyel ov eloquence to persuade my lad to rive hissel away; but when o th' case were laid afore their short-seeted e'en they gav in to my notions wi middlin bowd hearts.

"It's just here, childher," aw said, feelin like a scamp for thryin so hard to part 'em. "Yo're nobbut young, an' iv Tom stops here yo cawn't expect to get wed for tuthri year. Bi crossin th' say for awhile he con sooner afford to set up for hissel, an' there's nowt to hindher yo fro writin to one another as oft as yo'n a mind. Moore nor that, yo'll find bi partin whether yor likin for one another con ston wear or not."

Mi wife followed wi moore advice o' th' same mak; so at last Tom spoke up an' said,

"Aw darsay it's good sense yo're talkin. Emma, tha mun sattle this business. Mun aw goo or not?"

"Aw believe it'll be for th' best," Emma says, lookin up at me wi sorrowful e'en, her face white as a sheet; an' then hoo broke deawn into a cryin fit, an aw bowted off as iv aw'd done murdher, levin Tom to comfort her as weel as he could.

So one unbrokken family we started off on a fine spring mornin, to catch th' good ship "Galicia," an' seech a new wom among sthrangers far away. Squire put his yead in at th' railway carriage window just as t' thrain were stirrin.

"Aw'll nobbut say good mornin, Lijah, for yo'll o be londin back afore six month end."

"Hardly so soon," aw said, gripin his honest neighve; "but we'll hope to see thee again some day."

"Oh, ah! Yo'll soon have enough o' yon counthry, tha'll see. Give my compliments to o th' yollow-backs aw'm acquainted wi, an' tell 'em aw'm noane frettin misel to t' dyeath becose aw've lost their company. Punce Gomez for me, too, iv tha happens to leet on him."

Aw promised to see abeaut it, an' he made us o laugh bi reckonin to wipe some tears eaut ov his e'en as we slurred off.

When neet coome, still an' starlet, we were swingin on th' brode Atlantic waves. Tom sit bi hissel, very quiet, lost i' thought; Harry an' Lucy laughed an' talked together, weel enough satisfied wi th' change an' stir; mi wife an' me stood hond i' hond lookin o'er th' ship side. O aw loved best i' th' world were theere, thrustin their lives to thin planks an' th' skill o' thoose bowd, cliver sailors 'at dhrove us forrad sure an' sthraight, beaut oather gaslamp or hee-road, across that shiftin waste o' weet; an' aw felt once again what a blint helpless thing a mon is, an' heaw mich he's forced to depend on that unknown Peawer 'at rules us, oft bi sthrange or little-undherstood laws, but olez for lastin good.

"Dunnot thee fret, mi lass," aw said. "Keep thi e'en breet an' thi heart cheerful. Theausans o' good taugh English souls han thravell't this road afore us, comin to no hurt, riskin their lives here beaut one-hawve o' th' prospects we con see waitin for us, an' wi God's help we're sure to do weel. There's plenty o' folk in this ship to-neet wi throuble enough on their minds, iv we nobbut knew, but we'n no rezon for grumblin eaursel. Be bowd an' hopeful; everything 'll come reet."

"Aw'm weel content when aw'm wi thee," Alice said, an' bi th' dim star-shine aw seed her e'en were brim-full. "Whol we're together nowt con happen moore nor we con bide."

Her hond thrembl't i' mine, but aw weel knew no wake cowart feelins stirred that tendher, lovin heart. As we sailed on through th' calm neet aw bethought me o' grand owd Milton's words,

> "The world was all before them where to choose
> Their place of rest, and Providence their guide,"

an' a comfortin leet fro th' hee stars seemed to fill me wi quiet hope an' steady courage.

III.—Rio to Juiz.

Leet winds an' fair weather followed us as we ploughed reaund th' corner o' Europe an' sthruck off toard that bigger continent we were bund for. T' childher were full o' life an' excitement, findin fresh wondhers in every port we stopped at, an' new points ov intherest abeaut th' ship every day. Aw fund th' voyage raythor flattish misel, as aw'd bin o through it afore, an' hadn't Squire at hond neaw to cheer things up; beside, mi wife turn't eaut a bad sailor, nobbut keepin poorly most o' th' road, an' that helped to throw a saddish kest o'er th' journey. Poor Tom were moore dismal again, hardly ony seet or curiosity stirrin him eaut ov his throuble, his heart nobbut liftin a bit when we poo'd up at a stoppin-place where he could post one o' th' long letthers to his sweetheart he spent so mich time i' writin.

Lucy soon made hersel a favouryte wi sailors an' passengers. Hoo'd turn't sixteen year owd, an' groon into a bonny, healthy lass, breet an' cliver, weel fit to howd her own among ony mak o' company. Harry were two year younger, but very near as fawse; an' bwoth Alice an' me oft felt dull an' slow compar't wi sich wondherful far-larn't young uns, chock full o' science, grammar, an' gumption, yet wi so little snobbery abeaut 'em 'at nobry could ha piked ony eaut o' their ribs wi a reed-hook.

So i' good time we londed o safe at Rio, where aw'd little mind to tarry long, as th' fayver were knockin abeaut middlin brisk; an' aw were fain to find we could get forrad bi railroad next mornin up th' hills to Juiz de Fora, where th' family tent were neaw to be pitched, an' where we met expect to find cooler an' wholsomer air.

Fro th' say-level at Rio to Juiz, up among th' meauntains, there's a rise ov abeaut six theausan feet in two hundherd mile—a tidy climb for a railway thrain. We were seven heaurs slantin upbroo, startin at five an' londin bi noon. For scenery aw should be bother't to mention ony ever aw seed finer nor con be sin fro that railroad. First there's grand views o' Rio teawn an' bay to look at, sinkin lower an' lower as yo climb, an' glints o' th' rowlin blue ocean keep oppenin eaut between th' hills. Then, fur up, yo get among coffee plantations, sprinkl't wi fine heauses set among orange orchards or fleawer gardens, wi endless rows o' tall palms an' cocoa-nut threes for a change. There's no colours i' Englan like we con find i' thoose parts. Green's green theere, th' sun shines wi breet gowd, th' sky fair blazes wi blue; as for dirt, soot, fogs, snowbroth—why! yo may whistle for 'em.

There's a cliver piece ov engineerin on that line, where a steep hill's bored through bi three tunnels at different levels, an' lookin deawn fro th' top yo con see three lengths o' metals hangin one above another below.

We fund Juiz a tidy little teawn enough, t' sthreets paved wi white slutch, th' heauses mostly wood-built an' red-tiled, fleawers an' fruit grooin everywheere, dhrains an' medical officers never dhrem't on.

A civil young Portigee—a clerk fro th' mill—were waitin for us at th' station, an' he lost no time i' gettin us carted off to th' heause we were to live in, a comfortable one-story buildin wi floors o' pitch-pine an' whitewesh for papper. Eautside we'd a verandah o'erlookin a good slip o' garden-greaund; inside, a big kitchen, three sleepin-reawms, an' a cookin scullery.

We were o weel satisfied to find sich a nice heause waitin for us, an' t' childher ran abeaut i' rare glee, findin no end o' new seets an' seaunds i' that wondherful counthry.

"There'll be no lurryin up an' deawnstairs here, lass," aw said to mi wife when Tom an' me had getten o th' luggage safe inside. "This looks a shop likely enough to shuit us — weather-tight heausin, neighbours plentiful, civilised parts close at hond. Con we sattle here, dost think?"

"It's o sthrange to me yet," Alice said, lookin reaund wi raythér a lost leet in her e'en. "There's no flags to swill, no cellarin nor garrets, noather gaspipe nor slopstone, ash-grate nor cubbort. We may happen larn to get used to it, but aw'm fast heaw th' folk here con manage to live."

"That's just like Rachda women," aw said, laughin. "Shuz what part o' th' world they getten to they'll expect to find a kest-iron fire-range, a waythér tap, a flagged cosey an' a coal shoot. Heaw does this counthry look to thee, Tom?"

"Well," mi lad says, "aw remember once walkin wom fro Bowton late at neet. There werenot a sowl stirrin, an' but for th' gaslamps everything were pitch dark; an' when at last, afther a weary thrail, aw coome to Sudden broo it sthruck me aw'd never sin a welcomer bit o' scenery in o mi life. Fayther, what would it look like neaw?"

"Bless mi heart!" aw co'd eaut, thryin to cheer 'em up a bit, "what mak o' chicken sperits have aw browt across wi me? This mak o' talk's good for nowt! Columbus could ne'er ha fund America, lad, iv he'd bin like thee; an' as for owd Vasco, iv thy wake heart had bin inside him he'd ne'er ha done nowt but build hen-cotes or manage a bathin van!"

"They were two meddlin foos," says Tom in his sulks. "Aw wish they'd tarried awom."

Aw seed there'd be no good done wi botherin just then, so aw took him to look at th' mill, levin mi wife to shap some baggin. Afthér hawve a mile ov a walk we coome to th' facthry—a big place, very weel fitted up wi machinery—an' fund everybody civil. Th' honds were mostly Portigee an' German, but tuthri English faces were to be sin among 'em, an' aw could see nowt to stop us

fro sattlin theere contented iv we could nobbut just bring eaur minds to it.

Th' manager were fain to see me, for th' cardin engines hadn't bin runnin to his mind, an' he were anxious to have a change. We fund he were a German, an' larn't afther 'at we'd a whol colony ov his counthrymen in th' neighbourhood, brought o'er bi a company 'at used to run coaches on th' Petropolis road afore th' railway oppen't. That stopped their little gam, so most on 'em had bin left to shift for theirsel, gettin wark at th' facthry or wheere else they could.

"You are very welcome, Herr Garside," he says, talkin English like a native. "The sooner you can what you call make a start the better for us."

"Ony time," aw said, thinkin to misel he looked very delicate. "Aw'll start neaw iv yo wanten me."

"Ach! you are the man of beesness. It would be not fair to make you the slave so. Nein! When you are lodged and have ordered your affairs—yes, yes! that will be the time."

"Aw'll come in o' Monday mornin then. It's Thursday to-day, so nowt mich con be done this week, beaut yo're fair fast."

"That will be right, mein vriendt. You will have pot and kettle to buy, and what you call the house-warm. Ach, yes! On Sunday is a selling of furnishings at Procopio—you will get the cheap table and chairs from that."

"That'll be very hondy," aw said. "As for bitin midges, snakes an' sichlike, we con get 'em for nowt, aw darsay?"

"Ach so!" he grinned. "You are the funny man it looks."

He left us then, so Tom an' me wandher't back to get some baggin. Alice had getten her tay brewed, but were stuck fast for eightables. Hoo'd bin to a little store close to expectin to find loaves an' butther sowd bi a shopkeeper far-larn't i' Lancashire dialect; so afther a long jabber wi th' Portigee store-chap hoo'd gwone back cryin wi despair. Heawever that were soon put reet, for aw went across misel an' geet some good bananas, biscuits, rice, black byens, an' oddments to put us on whol we could rise a bakin-day; an' we were soon o sittin deawn to a plentiful meal, set eaut on box-tops for want ov a table, makin up bi jokes what were wantin i' comfort.

We fund in a day or two 'at bwoth loaves an' butther were to be had, iv we could afford to pay th' price. Flesh-meight coome chep, but th' groceries made us wink. Beef cost fourpence a peaund, loaves (less nor four peaund weight) a shillin apiece, tay eight shillin a peaund, coffee eightpence, pottatoes threepence, swop fivepence, blackenin for shoon fivepence a box (abeaut a hawpoth), saut a shillin a bottleful, an' nobbut a little bottle at that. So astid o' little beef an' plentiful thrimmins, as th' English

fashion is, we'd to put up wi exthra weight o' beef at Juiz to ratch bread an' pottatoes eaut.

Sunday turned eaut a busy day. It happened to be a saint day, so in th' Brazil style we'd a grand religious procession—lasses donned i' white, plump dignified priests, blazin candles, brass bands, fireworks, an' greight excitement. Shops, theaythres, an' dancin reawms were o i' full swing, fair horrifyin my wife, for hoo'd ne'er sin nowt o' th' sort afore, an' couldn't undherston sich carryins on. Th' auction sale shocked her feelins again, but we bought tuthri things theere, as it were a matther o' necessity wi us; part furnishin th' kitchen, an' so makin th' new heause look moore like wom.

Some very rich folk lived near us in a grand heause set reaund wi parks an' gardens. Th' husband had bin banished to Europe for some bother wi politics, levin his wife an' family six hundherd peaund a month to live on. We seed his wife walkin through her orange plantin, noane lookin so very cheerful as met be expected considherin what barrowfuls o' gowd hoo had.

"Poor thing!" Alice whisper't as we wandher't past sniffin th' warm fleawer-scented air; "hoo looks lonesome. Aw con feel for her, Lijah, for aw've noane forgetten what it were to loise thee."

"Heaw leets her chap didn't tak her wi him? Their livin's getten. They're happen fain to be shut o' one another a bit."

"Yon face doesn't say so. Tha sees hoo's noane gaddin abeaut watchin th' dancers or play-actin—hoo tarries awom bi hersel an' frets. Eh, what a counthry this is! Sich carryins on—an' good Sunday too! Aw never durst ha com'n iv aw'd known."

"Tha'll soon get used to it, mi lass, an' bear i' mind folk are noane forced to be bad becose their ways are different fro what we'n bin used to. Everybody cawn't be brought up i' Rachda. Come! give o'er waggin that yead o' thine, an' look weel at o these fine seets. Tha never seed sich scenery as this in o thi life."

We stopped on a risin hill just above th' little teawn, lookin deawn on th' red-tiled heauses, planned eaut i' hollow squares as th' Brazil style is. Above us big meauntains lifted sharp, brokken lines again th' clear blue sky; a swift deawn-dashin river foamed an' sang as it fell past us in a deep-worn channel; fruit an' fleawer, bush an' three were set thick abeaut us; greaund an' air were wick wi livin things, tem'd brode-kest fro nathur's oppen hond. A change, for sure, fro grey dhrivin Lancashire, to this mony-colour't yezzy-gooin, sweet-scented, shiftless lond! An' yet—

We looked into one another's e'en as we walked quietly back, th' settin sun brunnin itsel to t' dyeath behinnd us.

"It's o very grand," Alice says. "Very grand it is. But——"

"Tha'll soon loise this wom-sickness when we getten sattl't deawn. Wark starts i' yearnest to-morn; so we mun think o' nowt but bucklin to an' savin some brass. They're beaun to pay me a

bigger wage here nor ever aw've dhrawn afore, an' there'll be Tom helpin us beside."

"Brass is noane everything. Aw cawn't get yon poor woman's dismal face eaut o' mi thoughts."

"Cheer up, mi beauty!" aw said, feelin owt but cheerful misel iv thruth mun be towd. "Iv everything turns eaut as it should do we con lev this counthry i' five year, for bi that time aw s' ha made mi fortin."

IV.—Bucklin to.

Monday mornin seed us o up breet an' soon, gettin ready for wark. Tom an' me were at th' mill afore t' wayther-wheel set on, an' bi breakfast time we'd getten into full harness. Afore th' day had gwone aw fund misel swingin away at mi wark as iv aw'd bin i' th' shop long enough, feelin quite awom.

Aw'd nobbut th' spinnin an' cardin to manage, as th' looms were undher a separate o'erlooker, so mi business were simple enough to do, noather o'ertaxin brains nor time. Even iv aw'd wanted to dhrive on an' hurry things a bit aw should ha bin cheted, for th' honds went abeaut their jobs in t' thrue Brazil style, slow an' carless as childher getherin butthercups in a summer meadow; but aw didn't want, for experience had made me too weel acquainted wi th' native habits to dhrem o' meddlin.

This loom o'erlooker were a little clemmed-lookin Englishman, wi a desperate lot o' fuss abeaut him. He coome to me, shakin honds an' makin a lot o' slavverin compliments, sayin he'd ston mi friend olez an' help me through wi ony difficulties 'at met bother me; so aw thanked him, said aw hoped to keep friendly wi everybody theere, an' promised iv aw geet fast to ax his advice. He showed me reaund his weighvin reawm, but iv he expected me to praise his management theere he'd made a mistake. His looms were dirty an' ill-gear't—rayther sthrange, aw thought, for sich a capable chap as he'd seaunded when offerin to help me wi his superior knowledge—an' a lot on 'em were stonnin otogether.

"What are yo doin wi so mony looms stopped?" aw axed him.

"Waitin for stuff. T' preparation machinery's too little for t' keep all these frames runnin. I'm continally short ayther o' warps or cops."

"That's it, is it?" aw said, thinkin to misel aw'd tak middlin good care to keep him gooin wi stuff enough i' time to come, for it were plain to see wi hawve a look 'at aw'd plenty o' machines to turn eaut moore yorn nor he could weighve.

"Then t' cotton's so poor they send us I can hardly make it into respectable cloth. Yo'll find Grossel, t' manager, isn't very

experienced at his business. He reckons for t' grumble a deal at things nobody can help. Yo'll find him out."

"No deaubt."

"Th' cotton buyer's a bit green, I think. I've tried at odd times for t' give him a bit of advice, but he's above bein shown. There's a want o' practical managers about th' place, someways, an' t' board chairman often says to me, 'Reely, Mitchell, if it wasn't for you bein here I don't see how we could carry the place on.'"

"Then it's lucky tha coome."

"That may be t' reason for t' manager bein so jealous on me," th' o'erlooker went on, sinkin his voice to as low a confidential whisper as could be yerd among th' clankin machinery. "I think he's fear't I may be put into his shop."

"Tha'd tak it iv it were offer't, then?"

Mitchell showed his teeth in a spiteful grin. "I should be a fool for t' miss such a chance, man, an' there's nobody but me for it. What bi t' salary an' commissions a cute manager could make his fortin here."

Aw felt a cruddlin abeaut mi skin as iv a snake had wriggl't across mi road. So this little good-for-nowt were seechin a fortin too!

"Well," aw said, "iv tha'rt for doin him eaut ov his shop aw'd best keep friends wi thee, or tha'll happen be seckin me too afore so long."

"Oh no! We shall hit it off together, Garside. We're sure for t' do."

Aw felt owt but sure misel abeaut that point, but managed to keep mi tongue civil for that time, soon levin th' greight mon to swagger bi hissel.

In a week or two th' newness had worn off for most o' mi family, an' life sattl't deawn into th' steady habits an' reglar ways o' wortchin folk; for facthry wark's pratty mich th' same thing o up an' deawn th' world. Bits o' things kept happenin seldom known i' England, sich as stoppin for waythor or cotton, but on th' whol wark's wark shuz wheere we find it, a taydious endless reaund-abeaut, hard to follow an' wur to lev.

Alice soon fund friends among her neighbours an' began wearin her owd cheerful face again. Lucy were a rare help to her mother abeaut th' heause, Harry geet a job in th' mill office afore long, an' so we were like o provided for, o useful, o helpin one road or another in th greight object o' makin brass. Aw used to wag mi fawse yead at this time, rub mi honds, an' think "Goo on, Lijah, owd brid! Tuthri year at this rate an' tha'll be independent ov everybody."

A letther fro Squire reighched us afther a while. Aw'd sent to

him for tuthri kestins we were short on, so he'd takken into his yead to write.

"Rachda, Wakes week, 1887.

Dear Lijah,

So tha's wakken't up at last, an' recollected there's sich a chap as me wick? What boat are yo comin back on? Aw'm rayther deaubtful whether tha'll tarry long enough to get this mutual improvement essay or not, an' writin's nobbut a desperate dhry job at best, but aw'll risk it for owd friendship. Hast yerd what sport there's bin at th' facthry here sin' tha left wom? It seems they geet a young chap fro some technical schoo to fill thy shop, bi way o' makin sure o' gettin a gradely scientific mon; an' bi o acceaunts he'd science enough to run a whol mill beaut help. He distinguished hissel moore in a week nor ignorant chaps like us could in a lifetime. First ov o he went messin abeaut th' scutchin frame i' sich a clumsy style 'at he very near geet fast in it.

'Ston back, mon!' th' scutcher says, rivin him away like pooin a dish-cleaut off a nail. 'Get yor arm takken off somewheere else—we wanten no red dye among th' cotton here!'

'Ah, thank you, my good man,' says technical; 'I had overlooked the fact that the machine's power is in direct proportion to the number of revolutions made by the driving pulley. We had only a model at the school.'

'Yo'd ha bin poo'd in i' summat less nor hawve a jimcrack, schoo or no schoo,' th' scutcher grunted, watchin his mon close to be sure he didn't make a scientific murdher ov hissel.

'Not quite, my friend,' th' scholar said wi a pathronisin grin. 'I have had rather too much experience to be caught napping. What is the diameter of your shaft?'

He poo'd a notebook eaut to put th' figures deawn, rubbed his jacket tails again t' sthrap, an' were as near takken up on it as a toucher. Th' scutcher were in a cowd sweat wi terror bi that time, so he plucked young technical eaut o' danger again an' ordher't him off.

'Yo'n done enough for one day,' he says, 'an' aw'll tak th' responsibility o' keepin yo wick no longer. Be off eaut o' this hole—it's no place for schoolads!'

What does his fawse lordship then but bowt off to th' manager, complainin abeaut th' scutcher's impidence, as he co'd it, but that cock wouldn't feight.

'Aw'm noane intherferin between yo,' th' manager towd him. 'Yo'd best be gettin forrad wi yor own wark—there's a lot o' cards yon wanten grindin.'

'Very well, sir,' young science says, an' away he scutthers to th' card-reawm, axin one o' th' honds theere whose job it were to grind cards. Th' chap stared at him, fast what to make o' sich a foo's question as that, an' said he'd betther send for t' blacksmith.

So t' blacksmith were sent for an' coome up bare-armed an' black-faced.

'What the Belle-Vue fireworks has card grindin to do wi me?' he brasted eaut when t' cardher towd him what were wanted.

'I am told it is your duty,' science says. 'We had no occasion for the process at the school, so I am practically unacquainted with it.'

'Nay, it's noane o' my job. Somebry's bin humbuggin yo. My time's filled up wi lookin cuts an' gooin to th' Liverpool markets. It's a knife-grindin machine yo wanten—send a piecer eaut to find one, an' sit deawn quietly on yor frame end whol he comes back.'

Technical sent a lad eaut, as th' blacksmith advised him, but as he were too fawse to sit still waitin he spent his time i' fillin a warpin-mill full o' doublin bobbins, thinkin they were twist.

Mi lord were noane long i' gettin hissel secked at that rate, as tha may guess, an' there's bin two or three at th' job sin' he left it, noane on 'em doin mich good.

Aw hope yo'n had luck enough to leet on some mak o' Christian meight i' this new part o' t' counthry yo're explorin neaw. Tha remembers what gam we had up i' Mazyteawn to find provan? Eh dear! Englan! wi o thi faurts tha taks a dyel o' lickin i' th' meight an' dhrink line. There's nowt i' Brazil—noather tharcake for Guy Fawkes' day, curran cheese an' loave at Kesmas, nor pottato dolls for th' New Market. Aw'd sooner live i' Mildhro, where they'n sheep-yead broth every Sunday i' th' year obbut two—Wakes Sunday an' t' Sunday afther; becose on th' first they're o too rich to lower their stomachs to it, an' bi th' second they're too far spent up to buy ony. Aw went eaut to mi baggin at Ladyheause once an' geet greensauce cakes wi fayberry lev tay, sweeten't wi black thraycle an' stirred up wi iron spoons. Heaw's that for a hee-class spread? They cawn't come up to that mak i' Rio; an' iv they're left behinnd i' th' eightin line what chance han they when suppin comes to be mention't? They're nowheere! Who could live long in a counthry where ale's sowd at sich a price? Folk may weel be shrivell't an' yollow, seaukin up sperrits same as th' Portigees, never tastin wom-brewed fro year end to year end.

Maut an' hops
Fatten th' chops;
Whisky an' gin
Brun through t' skin.

Sing that once to th' miserable wizen't objects an' see what they han to say to it, an' then come wom again as soon as tha con. Aw guess tha'll oft feel like an owd woman 'at went for relief i' th' Rachda barley times, when fleaur were as dear as gowd an' folk clemmin. Th' owd dame geet a bagful ov ungrund rice for her share, so next time hoo went to th' relievin office hoo said, 'For God's sake, felley, gie me summat else this time; for t' childher's brokken their teeth cheawin yon stuff!'

Iv ever tha lives to see Rachda again tha'll stare at th' awtheration i' my wife. Hoo's comin to her senses at last, an' there's moore comfort i' th' heause neawadays nor ever we'n had sin' th' honeymoon. Tha remembers we'd a bit ov a dust last time tha co'd here, an' we'd tuthri moore afore th' job were sattl't; but o's reet neaw, an' th' owd lass has lost her foolish pride. Aw'd to brun her best Sunday bonnet afore hoo'd be fairly maisther't. There's bin no bother sin'.

Well, owd mate, aw keep chattin away to thee as iv aw were never beaun to stop. Aw'll send thoose kestins off this week, an' hope bi sthrict attention to business to merit moore pathronage, as th' fashionable twaddle gwoes. Tak care o' thisel—keep thi yead cool an' thi feet fro snakes, an' when thi conthract's finished cart thisel back to this smooky teawn, where tha'll olez find a hearty welcome fro thi friend whol he's wick,

SQUIRE MARCROFT."

Fayberry, gooseberry.

V.—A New Friend.

My father asks me to write down a few impressions of our life in that confounded Juiz de Fora, perched among the insufferable hills above Rio, saying that between us we can give a more complete account of our adventures there than he could alone; so to please him I am going to do it, however disagreeable the task may be, and I hope after that never to hear the detestable hole mentioned any more.

Is this strong language? You little know, reader, what this unlucky mortal of a Thomas Garside endured and suffered during his two years' banishment to the highlands of Brazil! Duty is its own reward, says the copy-book moralist; but although I crossed the sea purely from a sense of duty to my parents, no reward has yet arrived.

If I had not been in love perhaps my views of the matter might have been brighter; but I was in love, and deeply, so it is idle to waste more words on that aspect of the case.

If I had been an artist or a poet possibly the many beautiful scenes we passed through would have coloured my judgment with gayer tints. Instead of that I was a factory lad, ambitious enough to think of rising to a responsible position in the trade, and selfish enough to have a desire to reach that position as soon as possible, feeling beyond that no pinings for worldly wealth or luxury, and quite expecting to be a toiler all my life.

So in bitterness of spirit I sailed away from old England, leaving my heart there, thinking only of the time when return would be feasible; and poor Emma tarried at home to fret and hope, and wait with a woman's patience, as many before her have had to do.

"For men must work and women must weep."

Of course, a good deal of this gloominess wore off by the time we got settled at Juiz de Fora, and once fairly started with regular work the days and weeks got themselves over well enough, a certain pleasure coming from counting them up as so many obstacles knocked on the head and buried. We soon fell into the ways of the place; but certainly never learned the shiftless, unconcerned habits of the natives. "Come day, go day, God send Sunday," they seem to think; the main object of their attention being to avoid all worries of every description and do as little work as possible. On my first day at the mill a yellow-skinned loafer smashed four beam flanges through sheer idleness, but showed no more concern than a child would at plucking a daisy. "No faz mal—tem outer," he says, carelessly (meaning that the breakage was of no consequence, as we had plenty more of the same sort), and rambled off, leaving his bits for somebody else to shift.

The natives can live on next to nothing, and are content to do it very often. Black beans and rice, with a chunk of pork or beef at intervals, suffice them for food, and the genial climate makes them independent of clothing. A skirt of thin factory material with a coloured kerchief round the neck for the women, a pair of light pantaloons and the thinnest of shirts for the men, and there you are. Add to these a straw hat and a pair of tamancoes, and you arrive at the full dress of the labouring classes. The tamanco is a peculiar foot covering, with leather upper and shapeless wood sole, made without heel-piece, and looking like a cross between a clog and a sandal.

The factory work was easy enough to my father and me, hardly needing a thought after the first day or two. We could have taken the whole concern in hand just as easily, if need had arisen; dispensing entirely with the services of manager Grossel and loom-canker Mitchell. The manager, in fact, looked ill and fragile enough, even in those early days of our acquaintance with him, to give us much reason for supposing that his management would not last many months longer. We all liked him well, finding him always a just and amiable man, who used considerately the almost unrestricted power left in his hands by the directors, and strove with care and thought to act equally in the interests of masters and men.

Our lives ran along smoothly until mid-winter, when a new acquaintance turned up to relieve the growing melancholy of my existence. I had roamed off a mile from the town one Sunday morning, making towards a group of mountains over which the paths ran to the higher altitudes of the interior, losing myself and the track also among the riotously-extravagant luxuriance of vegetation, now at its greatest height and strength. Pushing slowly on through a wilderness of wild growths taller than myself, I heard a fresh, sweet voice begin to sing, growing in volume as it came nearer to me.

"I see her in the dewy flow'rs,
That spring sae fresh and fair;
I hear her in the merry birds,
Whose music charms the air;
There's not a bonny flow'r that springs
By fountain, shaw, or green,
There's not a merry bird that sings,
But minds me o' my Jean."

"And that's where you are?" the singer said, coming within sight of me as his voice lingered over the last tender cadence of his tune. He was a middle-sized, active young fellow, with freckled face and scanty moustache, and he smiled at me in a friendly way.

"Where did you learn to sing like that?" I asked him. "Your heart was in the music."

"The wee birdies in the Heelands taught me, man. Ye'll have seen Scoatland yoursel, it's like?"

"No."

"Hech, laddie! Dinna ye set me thinking about my native hills so airly the morn. Come awa back to the toon, now I've foregathered wi ye, and we'll have a bit crack. That's if ye're no compelled to gang on further, ye ken."

I turned back with him willingly enough, such pleasant companions being scarce in that part of the world, and on the way he "spiered" me, as he called it, to learn my name, business, and connections. His curiosity was soon satisfied, and on my part I proceeded to sper for particulars relating to himself.

His name was Watty Ferguson, he told me, and his work lay at a gold mine among the hills. He had come down to civilised districts for a month's holiday, intending to catch a train at Juiz for Rio, where he had friends.

"That's all right," I said; "but as you can't get forward to-day, come and have some breakfast with me and see my folks."

"And so I will," he said; "for losh, man! a white skin's pleasant to see, and an English tongue makes music in ma ears after a long spell up yonder among the natives."

So I took him home to breakfast, and very glad they all were to have so cheerful a visitor; and later on we all walked over to the German village, where we attended service in a little Lutheran church. Then we wandered back home to dinner, and by the time that meal was over our new friend was quite one of the family. Some hints he gave us about getting on his road were laughed at, our unanimous decision being that the very least he could do would be to tarry for the night, catching an early train next morning.

"Tha mun goo noane to-day, lad," my father said in his downright way. "Tha'll find no moore comfortable shop nor this to sleep in, an' we're o fain to have thee. Stop here a week, iv tha's a mind."

"Ah, no, Mr. Garrside! I must be getting down the braes to Rio e'er it's lang. I would bide here till morn if ye would take siller for the lodging."

"Ah, but we shannot do so," my mother said, laughing. "This is noane a lodgin-heause, but we con shap to find thee a bed for o that."

"Do stay, sir," says Lucy, turning her blue eyes full upon him. "We will do our best to make you comfortable."

"And would you wish it, lassie?" the Scotchman asked, looking her straight in the eyes. "Then I'll bide here, though I doubt ye'll make me so comfortable that I'll want to leave ye nae mair."

He bided accordingly, delighting us all with his pleasant ways

and bright looks, making that Sunday memorable for us. Early next morning he started for the coast, promising to call on his way back, and possibly spend another night with us, before losing himself in the solitude of the mountains again. He spoke highly of the mine he was connected with, praising the management, and speaking confidently of the value of the shares, which were then paying a regular dividend of twenty per cent. My father was evidently interested in this talk, and asked many questions about the mine, the directors' names, and so on, until my mother objected that conversation of that sort was unsuitable for Sunday.

At the end of a month young Watty turned up again on a Monday night, saying that he had called to beg a night's lodgings, and must face the mountain road with dawn next morning.

"And I'll pay ye naething for it," says he, "press me sair as ye may. Once ye refused good siller, and noo I've little to offer, for Rio's a strange place to swallow the bawbees."

My mother gave him some tea, lamenting his changed appearance, his visit to the sweltering lowlands having thinned him down a good deal, and we all spent another pleasant evening with him. He had much to tell us of places and people seen during his holiday, filling up the time with songs when talk ran out. His favourite ballad seemed to be the one I had heard him singing at my first meeting with him—Burns' "Of a' the airts," to my mind one of the most tender and beautiful songs ever produced by the inspired ploughman.

Nobody could have heard Ferguson sing those exquisite lines without a throb of the heart and a tear in the eye. His own eyes were wet, and his sweet voice trembled with real feeling, leaving us all silent after the last pathetic cadence.

"Anybody could swear Burns was in deep earnest when he wrote that song," I said; "and for all that he was most likely dangling after several other women at the same time."

"Of course he was in earnest, ye doubting rascal," says Watty. "It's no for naething ye were christened Thomas, ye unbelieving Sassenach! It's no for the like o' you to criticise Burrns. Where would I be up the hills yonder, far awa from a' friends as I am, if I hadna the Scoatch sangs for company. It's no just the words, ye ken, nor yet the tune, but the auld times that come back to mind, the pictures o' strath an' heather-knowe, loch or brae-side. Ah no! there was never a sang writer like Burrns."

None of us felt inclined to contradict him on that point, and after a while we all got ourselves off to bed. Next morning the Scotchman was up early, ready to start on his road before my father and I set off to the mill.

"I've a wee bit brooch here," Ferguson said, pulling a parcel from his pocket just before he went. "I bought it in Rio. Will ye wear't, lassie, gin I give 't ye?"

Lucy blushed like a rose, and shrank back behind her mother, saying nothing in reply.

"Noo, Mrs. Garrside, ye'll no be hinderin the lassie. There's nae harm at all. She shall hae 't for a kiss, and I'll pin it on her breast mysel."

He proceeded to do so at once, while we all laughed. The brooch was an oval plate of silver, with the word "Lembranca" (Remembrance) engraved on it. Then he kissed Lucy and my mother, saying,

"That sends me back to Glasgae, mither. Ye're the first woman I've kissed since leaving the auld hame."

"Poor lad! It's very lonely for thee up yon hills, wi hardly a Christian to speighk to," my mother said. "Tha mun slip deawn sometimes ov a Sunday, an' we'll thry to cheer thee up a bit."

"Dinna doubt that," says Watty. "I'll be coming, ye'll see."

"Tha'll be welcome, lad," my father said. "Next time tha comes bring a prospectus or two o' th' gowd mine. Aw'm curious to see heaw it stons an' who yor directhors are."

Ferguson promised that he would do so, took leave of us all, and walked briskly off towards the hills. We all stood out in the garden watching him climb the rising path. He turned once to wave a hand at us, Lucy shaking her handkerchief in return; then he plodded along steadily, and we heard his sweet voice singing one of the ditties he loved so well.

> "Farewell my friends, farewell my foes;
> My peace with these, my love with those;
> The bursting tears my heart declare—
> Farewell the bonnie banks of Ayr!"

VI.—Changes.

Anybody who happens to know my father's style of setting about his work will need no telling that everything was soon put into apple-pie order in his department of the factory. There had been some difficulty about spinning cops enough to keep the looms running before he took the job in hand, but in a month he was well beforehand with both weft and warps. Still the looms were not got to work, fully twenty of them standing idle from week-end to week-end, lost in dirt, covered with rust, doing no good to anybody. Grossel, the head manager, complained often about this unsatisfactory business, but could never get the loom overlooker to admit any fault on his side. Before long Grossel came to my father to see if he could help in the matter, saying the overlooker told him we couldn't produce yarn enough to feed all the looms, and wanting to know the reason.

"Come this road," my father said at once, taking the manager to see a big pile of full skips and bobbins. "There should be

enough here to be gooin on wi. Tell yor tackler to weigve his hardest—aw'll keep up wi him yo'll see."

"Very good, Herr Garside. You are the man of business," says Grossel; so he marched off and stirred Mitchell up.

A fortnight later Grossel came in again, saying the looms had never been touched, and asking my father's opinion about the reason for Mitchell's neglect. My father said in his dry way,

"Surelee it's noane becose he cawn't make 'em run? To yer him talk he's th' only mon here 'at undherstons machines."

"That is very right," says Grossel, smiling. "He would teach me my business if I did let him. Tom, my vriendt, ask that man to step here."

I went into the weaving shed, found Mitchell walking about whistling with his hands in his pockets, and gave him the manager's order.

"I've hardly time for t' come just now," says Mitchell. "I'm full o' work for a bit. What's up, Tom?"

"Nay! don't ask me. The manager's waiting for you in the warehouse."

"It's very awkart bein called away from work like this. If aught goes amiss while I'm out it's me 'at 'll get blamed for it. There's a deeal o' bother wi gaffers awlus."

I suggested, trying to keep a serious face, that the mill could be stopped until he got back to his looms, and all chance of accidents avoided in that way, upon which he shot a suspicious squint at me out of his little eyes, and marched off. I followed him into the warehouse, where we found the manager and my father contemplating the piles of twist and weft, which had grown bigger than ever.

"You complain to me that you wait for stuff, Herr Mitchell, yet here it looks is more yarn than enough for your weavers. Is it not?"

Mitchell looked about him, and was forced to admit that we were well ahead of him for the moment.

"Then you will let me have all the looms running at once," says the manager. "They have stand too long."

"I didn't think it wisdom for t' push too much cloth out," says Mitchell, as cool as could be. "We're keepin well up to th' salesman."

Grossel stared at him, completely staggered by this piece of impudence. However, he could always control his temper, and all he said was,

"I will myself attend to the selling, Herr Mitchell. Let me see what you call push out all you can."

"Well, I mun try for t' get some more looms on as soon as there's time. But rayliegh I'm o'erworked as it is, an' could do wi some help. I'd best have a under-tackler to help me out, an' then

I could shape to help in th' office at odd times if yo happened for t' want me, or give Lijah here a lift in th' cardroom when he's o'er pushed."

"Tha con give me o th' help aw'm likely to want as it is," my father said. "Aw'm thinkin o' gooin on short time next week whol tha catches up to us a bit."

"Yo'll have time for t' help me wi yon looms then, happen. My time's awlus a good deeal taken up wi havin to watch so many different things, sich as helpin th' salesman wi his samples, keepin th' turbine i' good runnin order, an' so on."

"Ach himmel!" says the manager. "It's every man's business but your own that you would do. Let me soon have the looms to run, or I must arrange some other way. It is for you to weave, and meddle not with other affairs at all."

"Oh! Is that it?" Mitchell asked in what he intended for a tone of honest independence. "Yo can crow now, when I've been here long enough for t' have my brains sucked an' getten yor consarn into good workin order! That's t' reward a chap gets! If I'm not givin yo satisfaction pay me up, an' we'll dissolve the contract by common consent."

Grossel took no notice of all this, but walked away to his office without more talk. Then the overlooker began to jabber at my father.

"That's awlus t' road these gaffers come interferin. They will do it—like as they can ne'er trust a man. He'll be for servin yo t' same afore yo've bin here so long."

"Dost think so? He cawn't say aw've ony machines stonnin, shuzheaw. What's to do wi yon looms, makes thee so freeten't on 'em?"

"They're a odd lot of old rubbish, nobbut fit for t' be broken up into scrap iron. There isn't a tackler livin as could make 'em wayve good cloth; but I'll set 'em on, an' yon manager mun take th' risk."

Away went Signor Mitchell, ruffling his feathers like a defeated gamecock. My father chuckled as we turned to our work again, and said to me,

"Hasta looked at yon owd looms, Tom?"

"No," I said.

"Well, aw have. They're undherpick looms, an' it's plain enough to me yon Jack ov o thrades finds hissel fast wi 'em. They'll weighve reet enough when they're set plumb an' getten abeaut hawve a ton o' dirt scraped off 'em. We s' ha to tak 'em i' hond eaursel, aw expect, afore there's ony good done."

After another fortnight Mitchell managed to get four more looms on, and turned off some cuts that made both manager and salesman swear at him. The cloth was uneven, and had no face on it fit to be seen.

"No wonder, nayther," says Mitchell. "There isn't a chap livin could make 'em wayve reet, even if we'd dacent cotton to goo at; this stuff we get for t' work up con hardly be made int' cloth at all."

"What ails it?" my father asked. "Th' stuff spins weel enough, an' should weighve reet for what aw con see."

"It may happen look so to you, but it's them as has for t' feight with it as knows."

Grossel had come to the limit of his patience by this time. He turned on Mitchell,

"Take out the warps and let the four looms stand till Christmas. Your contract finishes then, and will not be renewed."

"Pay me up an' I'll go now," Mitchell shouted, and went on jabbering a lot more stuff, so we all went away to attend to business, leaving the poor simpleton to himself.

It was certainly hard lines for the overlooker, but he had made himself so thoroughly disagreeable to nearly everybody in the place by his conceit and meddling propensities that very few people felt any sympathy with him. With the new year my father took charge of the looms, leaving much of the preparatory work to me; and in a fortnight the despised underpicks were all running, turning out as good cloth as could be woven by any loom in the shed.

So Mitchell vanished from the scene, with curses on his lips and abiding malice in his breast, and our manager began to rub his hands with satisfaction at the increased production. But he did not rub them much longer, poor fellow. His health failed him just when the mill began to answer his expectations. Everybody had seen for months that he was losing flesh and energy, and before summer came he was incapable of further work.

The natural end came, and we had poor Grossel's body to lay in the cemetery. As the custom is, he was put into his coffin dressed in a black suit, a white linen front ornamented with gold studs on his breast, and all the mill hands walked in a motley procession behind the body. In the Juiz cemetery only the poorest people were buried in the ground. A high double wall of adobe surrounded the place, the inner sides being pierced with triple rows of cells large enough to hold a coffin, and here all persons of distinction in the neighbourhood found their places of rest. In one of these cells poor Grossel was laid, the opening was bricked up, and the crowd of mourners paid their last tributes to the memory of a just and kindly man.

The mill management now rested upon my father's shoulders, with the result that I had to go into the loomshed, an under-carder taking my place. The directors met to consider the appointment of a new manager without coming to any particular decision, and after a month of uncertainty concluded that my father should have a fair chance of showing what he could do. They put up both

his wages and mine to a handsome figure, and as our family sat at the tea table that night hopes of a speedy return to old England grew strong in our breasts.

"It's a good job eaut ov a bad un," my father said, smoothing down his full beard. "Yon manager were a rare chap—aw've let across very few as upreet an' rezonable as him, an' it's a theausan pities he's gwone. But for o that aw cawn't help feelin fain to get sich a lift up as this."

"Perhaps you won't give them satisfaction, father," said sly Lucy. "You are only on trial yet."

"What con a mon wish for moore nor a chance o' thryin?" he said, squeezing her in his powerful arm for her archness, and smiling at us all. "Let humbugs an' idlers jump into shops they're noane fit to fill—a gradely mon nobbut laughs at sich foos, scornin hissel to be set on a pyerch he hasn't fairly climbed to! Show me a moore pitiful object nor a chap reckonin to do wark he's noather knowledge nor gumption to undherston! He dhraws a big wage, happen, an' hecthors abeaut thinkin nobry con see through him, whol everybody's grinnin at him behinnd his back. Tha little knows thi fayther, lass, iv tha taks him for sich a turmit as that."

"Brag's a good dog," our mother said, laughing.

"Yo con say what yo'n a mind," young Harry chimed in, "but iv we cawn't manage yon facthry among us let 'em give us o th' seck, an' welcome."

We were all forced to grin at this, and my father turned his eyes to me.

"An' what does Tom say?"

I said, "Father, there is not one here but knows that all mill work is child's play to you; not one here but knows and thanks God for knowing that you are an honest man, and the best husband and father in the world; and if the directors don't confirm your appointment we will try them for burglary and arson in the criminal courts of Brazil."

"Well, thoose 'at liven 'll see," my father said, "but aw mun say there looks a healthy chance just neaw o' makin that fortin."

VII.—Throubles Begin.

Young Tom's gien me a bit ov a lift wi this historical job, an' he swaggers moore nor a little abeaut his share o' th' wark; but he's like a lot moore o' these fawse young uns—hardly as cliver as he thinks. His writin's too mich dictionary in it, an' like most hee-class describers he o'erlooks a lot o' womly touches 'at 'd give force an' colourin to his tale. For one thing he could ne'er give his mind to th' job, becose he hates Brazil an everything abeaut it, grumblin to this day at th' time he spent theere parted fro his lass.

There were no howdin him when his two year were up. Nowt but owd England would do for Thomas then; no railway were swift enough to whuzz him to Rio, no wynt too sthrong to blow him across th' say. His mother cried, Lucy cried, Harry whimper't, aw grunted a bit just to show mi authority, but o were wasted on him.

"Pack him his things up, mother," aw said. "Love's clen run away wi him, yure an' corns. Get o ready, an' aw'll go deawn to Rio an' see him shipped off."

So we ordher't things that road, an' inside o' three days aw seed him safe aboard for his long voyage. We parted beaut fuss —th' women had made enough o' that at Juiz—for we knew one another too weel to need ony palaverin.

"Good-bye, father," Tom said, an' aw seed th' glint ov a tear in his e'e as aw turned to th' gangway. "Let us have you at home before long. When I see you all safely back in Lancashire I will forgive you for this crazy fortune hunting, and not before."

"Crazy, is it? Tha'd happen best see me locked up safe in a sylum afore tha sails."

He gav me his hond. "God bless you, father! Never a son had better parents than I have, or loved them more than I do mine. You have made a man of me—or you and Emma together —and I can do little to repay all your kindness and wise counsel."

"Tom," aw said, "time's short, an' th' captain's gettin restless yon on his bridge. Iv we never meeten again think on it rests wi thee to uphowd th' Garside name. We com'n ov a good owd family, an' for hundherds o' years back every Garside's addl't his own livin, done his share o' wark, an' thried to use his neighbour same as hissel. It lies wi thee neaw to follow thi long line ov ancesthors wi sthraight feet an' bring up thi childher to do th' same. Let me never yer on thee tellin dirty lies nor layin a finger on owt but what justly belongs to thee. Think on law's one thing an' reet's another. Whol tha's a shillin left tha con olez spare sixpence for a friend beaut brass. Say nowt again folk behinnd their backs. Sup nowt sthronger nor wom-brewed, an' noane too mich o' that. Keep low thoughts eaut o' thi mind bi fillin it wi things brode an' hee. Festen thi e'en on th' sky—it's as yezzy to look up as deawn, an' makes a vast difference in a mon. That's abeaut o, aw think—there's advice enough theere to last for life."

"You are as wise as Polonius and much more practical," says Tom. "Our long family roll of honourable traditions shall not be blemished by me. Good-bye."

"God bless thee, my lad," aw said. "Mind o' fo'in."

Th' engine jonked, aw beaunced o'er th' side into a boat, th' big screw turned grindin, slow an' steady th' greight styemer slipped away wi sheautin an' wavin fro deck an' quay-side. My lad were gwone.

As aw walked back toard th' station who should aw meet but little Mitchell, lookin wur clemmed nor ever, an' donned i' rags 'at 'd hardly howd together to cover him. He sent a murdherous sceawl at me across th' road, but aw cared nowt for t' poor fellah's spite, knowin weel aw'd done nowt to desarve it. Aw crossed o'er to him.

"Nay, Mitchell!" aw said. "Whatever's brought thee deawn to this pitch?"

He looked at me, black as thunner, an' wouldn't speighk.

"Tha'll find thi tongue in a bit," aw said. "Come this road!"

There were a little cookshop near us, so aw took him bi th' arm an' lurried him inside. He were noane for gooin at first, but as aw could ha carried him undher mi arm like a babby iv he'd bin stupid, he changed his mind an' coome quietly. They brought us some wot soup, wi pork an' bananas to follow, an' th' little mon went at 'em wi moore relish nor ever aw'd sin him show at tacklin his wark. But he'd say nowt, an' looked as sulky as ever.

"Aw'll sattle thee, owd brid," aw thought to misel; so when we'd etten up aw paid th' bill, an' took mi nowty scholar to a ready-made clooas shop deawn bi th' harbour, where aw geet him some dacent things to his back at smo expense. Th' owd Portigee shopman thried to swindle me eaut o' tuthri milreis, but fund me rayther too owd-fashion't for him.

Aw walked reaund Mitchell an' looked up an' deawn him, thinkin to misel he'd do, so we went eaut. He looked a new mon, what wi dinner an' clooas.

"Neaw, Mitchell," aw said, "thi sulkiness matthers nowt to me, but aw mun catch this next thrain to Juiz; so find thi tongue an' let's yer heaw things ston wi thee."

"They're —— bad! You know as they're like for t' be when you've done me out o' my shop."

"It's no shappin o' mine, lad," aw said. "Dost think aw poison't Grossel, or what? But that matthers nowt—what arta beaun to do wi thisel?"

"Clem to t' deeath. I've tried a deal o' shops, but I can get nowt for t' do. You've shoved me out an' happen yo'll live to rue it some day."

"Give o'er o' thi twaddlin talk," aw said, gettin a bit mad at him. "Wilta bite th' hond 'at feeds thee? Neaw aw'll tell thee what it is—my lad's off wom i' yon ship 'at's dhroppin below t'wayther line. He's bin runnin thy looms, an' there's bin nobry put in his place yet, so iv tha's a mind to come back wi me an' behave thisel aw'll tak thee on again as o'erlooker. Every loom i' th' shade's runnin neaw, an' aw'll help thee eaut wi yon undher-picks iv tha gets fast. It mun be undherstood between us 'at tha

Lurried, dragged.

meddles wi nobry's wark beside thi own, an' rests content wi thi own job beaut thryin to boss o th' mill; an' that's th' only condition aw'll ax thee to make."

Mitchell seauked in a deep breath, an' looked up very near as consequential as ever.

"I knew as you were certain for t' miss me when I'd left," says he. "Happen you'll own up now as you were in t' wrong for to get me turned off."

It were no use talkin to sich a mon as that, so aw paid his fare to Juiz an' carted him back up th' hills. In a week's time he were swaggerin an' chattherin abeaut th' mill wi moore edge on him nor ever, though aw took good care his foolishness didn't intherfere wi his wark.

Young Ferguson had getten into a reglar habit o' spendin Sunday wi us, reckonin to say he were pinin away up i' th' hills for want o' civilised society. To show us heaw thrue that tale were he used to vanish afther he'd getten his dinner, seldom showin his nose again whol tuthri minutes afore he'd to start back. It began to sthrike me in a while 'at Lucy were never to be fund on a Sunday afthernoon, so then it like dawned on me 'at these two were cwortin, a fact everybody else had sin plain enough for a good bit. What smo deaubts aw could have abeaut th' job were shifted at last, for th' lad coome axin mi consent to th' weddin. Aw'd little to say again it, for Wat were a good lad, one fit to thrust mi bonny lass's happiness to, an' as he geet a good wage there could be no disputin his bein able to keep her; th' only dhrawback were his lonely wom among th' meauntains, bad enough for a lively chap like him, an' likely to be a dyel wur for Lucy.

Well, there's no need to goo into every little point o' th' business. It's enough 'at Alice an' me alleawed 'em to start sweetheartin (as they'd bin cwortin tuthri week on their own hook), lookin forrad to a weddin afore mony month were up.

Aw'd satisfied misel abeaut th' gowd mine bein a safe investment, an' takken up as mony shares as aw could afford. Ferguson paid th' brass in for me, an' brought me th' scrip deawn, sayin aw'd made a good spec.

"Put in all ye're worrth," he said. "Twenty per cent. every year, an' as safe as the bank! The mine's deep enough to hold all your airnings."

"No deaubt it is; but con we get 'em eaut again, that's th' question!"

Aw thought Watty's advice were good, an' towd him aw'd tak moore shares up at t' quather end, when aw dhrew mi wage. Aw'd some thoughts o' sellin eaut mi English cotton shares an' investin o that lot i' gowd; but they'd bin payin so little dividend that year 'at there were no partin wi 'em at owt like a fair price.

"They'll get up again," aw thought to misel. "Aw'll let 'em a-be a bit."

Afore long aw'd summat else to think abeaut nor brass breedin. As we geet on toard December th' temperature went up to a pitch hardly ever known on that coast afore. Even among th' hills, where we lived, one could nobbut just bide, an' deawn at th' say level folk were bein fair roasted wick. Business coome to a ston-still, for they'd nobbut three heaurs a day fit to stir abeaut in; ships swung idle i' th' harbour, waitin for stuff 'at never coome; pack mules an' horses wandher't abeaut free fro wark, fain to cool theirsel bi t' wayther-side; folk ov o maks—black, white, an' yollow—were to be sin lyin sthretched i' rows wherever a bit o' shade could be fund fro th' sun's witherin leet.

Neaw, wot weather at Rio olez myens fayver, so yo may judge what th' state o' things were at this time. Folk were deein i' swathes, like grase on a mowin day, every sowl 'at could shap it flyin up into th' hee levels fur inlond, where th' air were fresher an' risks ov infection less. Plenty coome to Juiz among other shops, thinkin o' nowt but savin theirsel, an' th' fayver coome wi 'em, makin things rough for some on us. Th' little cemetary began fillin up fast, wark coome to a stonstill at t' facthry, one hawve o' th' honds fo'in ill, then to creawn things for us mi wife catched th' complaint, very near sendin me eaut o' mi wits wi terror.

Wi o mi cliver calkilations, an' plans for sattlin heaw th' world were to turn olez wi a sunny side my road on, nowt o' this mak had sthruck me. It were summat otogether again experience for mi wife to ail owt moore nor little women's touches o' sickness, lastin happen a day or two. Her job were nursin other folk when they happened to be laid helpless, an' some weel aw knew heaw long an' wi what tendherness that unselfish wark had bin done. But for Alice hersel to be takken bi a sayrious disease like this terrible marsh-fayver, 'at swept abeaut on seaundless wings poisonin folk brodekest, stagger't me quite. Could it be 'at aw mut loise her—that faithful heart so long playin i' tune wi mi own—levin her bwons buried on thoose dyeadly sun-brunt hills? Th' same thoughts were in her own mind too. As aw stood bi th' bedside one day, when hoo were lyin very wake an' far-spent, hoo gav me her wasted hond, lookin up at me wi sunken wild e'en, an' said,

"Lijah, iv aw should dee here for God's sake carry me wom to owd England. Aw could never rest buried i' this counthry."

"Never talk o' deein yet," aw said, fair heart-brokken; "or iv tha mun dee give thi ordhers to somebry else. Aw've done wi this world iv tha'rt for levin it."

"There's Lucy an' th' lads to think abeaut—tha mun live for them. Promise me, Lijah, an' then aw con dee content. Say tha'll carry me wom, for aw know iv thi word's once passed tha'll see it done."

"Iv aw live long enough afther thee," aw said, "an' iv it's possible considherin what ails thee, aw'll see thi coffin safe to England an' bury it theere in a spot weel known to us bwoth; that's thi last wish, it's o aw con do to plez thee, an' aw'll thry mi hardest to see it through. Then aw hope to dee misel, an' be soon lower't into th' same grave, an' iv God's hearkenin to us neaw let him set a mark in His book again my name for witness 'at aw've said it. Aw curse th' day an' th' heaur this wild fortin cravin first enther't mi yead; mi brain's bin turn't wi selfish plans an' greedy thoughts; aw con see neaw as iv it were written i' fire across mi e'en what a pitiful mistake a mon con make bi sthrivin for moore nor his share, astid o' stickin fast to honest wark whol th' end. But aw'm punished for mi back-reckonins, Alice; desperate ill punished!"

"Aw knew we could ne'er prosper here," hoo said. "Heaw aw've pined to go wom nobry con ever be towd! It were o myen't for th' best."

Aw could howd no longer—aw'd to get misel eautside into th' air. Hardly knowin what aw did aw made for Mitchell's heause, went sthraight in, an' fund him smookin at his fireside. He looked at me wondherin, for aw'd sit me deawn beaut sayin owt, an' there were summat ov a wild look abeaut me, most likely.

Mitchell spoke first. "How is your wife gettin on, Garside? They're sayin as she'll have a job for t' mend."

Aw couldn't tell him. For mi life aw couldn't ha spokken th' words, "Hoo's deein." When aw fund mi tongue aw said,

"Mitchell, aw'm for England bi th' first boat we con catch. Shuz what happens aw con tarry no longer here. Aw'll breighk mi conthract an' give mi job up whatever it costs, so when th' mill sets on again they'll want a new manager."

Mitchell's little e'en twinkl't. He were thinkin hissel just th' mon for my shop, aw darsay.

"I'm sorry for your misfortins, Garside; but you'll happen find now what it's like for t' be i' trouble, an' learn how other folk feels. I've awlus said as you'd have to suffer some day."

"Happen so," aw said. "Iv aw should meet a friend i' wur trouble nor misel aw'll noane give him sich Job's comfort as thine."

"I'm reely very sorry for you, Lijah—I reely am. Still, as you've awlus stood i' my leet, an' it were through you as I got sacked, it's not for t' be expected as I should cry because you're goin out o' my road. This calamity's a judgment on you in a sense."

"Laugh then, iv it'll shuit thee betther," aw said. "Aw'm a brokken-hearted mon, an' no barkin fro mongrel heaunds like thee con stir mi temper. Crawl on i' thi own gutther, snarlin an' bitin thi best friends as tha scrunches th' bwons they gien thee, get

thisel respected iv tha con, an' do thi best to disgrace thi breedin; for there's nobry i' th' owd counthry 'at 'll ever howd thee to be a gradely Englishman."

"I'll call myself owt for brass—ayther English or Irish, Spenish or Mexican. A chap's no need for t' bother hisself about such nonsense if he can nobbut get forrad i' life."

Aw left him theere, an' aw've never clapped e'en on th' waspish, thankless, miserable object fro that day to this.

VIII.—Ruin Follows.

Aw went back up t' sthreet feelin as iv mi life were abeaut at th' far end, seein things abeaut me in a sort ov a dhrem, mi mind far away. Aw looked at nowt, but could see everything near me —th' milkman takkin his ceaw reaund to milk at his customers' durs, some natives busy in a little orange plantin, a big lizard sthretched on th' sunny side ov a quartz rock, a fruitseller balancin a board full o' bananas on his yead, stark-nak'd childher playin 'em among wild fleawers an' undherbrush, an' so on, even to a split breek in a heause wall. Aw coome up to mi own dur, an' theere were t' Portigee docthor just comin eaut.

"Sir Garside," he said in his best English, "the danger is from your wife."

Aw catched him, beaut thinkin what aw did, in a gripe 'at made him set his teeth wi pain an' dhrop his gowd-yeaded stick.

"Is th' danger o'er, docthor?"

He nodded.

"Are yo sure hoo'll live?"

T' docthor nodded again, though as it sthruck me afther he couldn't have undherstood mi Rachda style o' talkin. Happen he wanted to get loase, an' so were ready to nod at owt aw said; but be that as it may, his nod shifted a weight o' sorrow sich as aw'd ne'er known afore, an' sent me deawn on mi knees at Alice's bedside to give thanks to that awful, unsin Ruler 'at con so mould an' shape us eaut lives ov happiness or pain.

Her life were safe, an' o we cared for neaw were to get back wom as soon as sthrength enough coome into her limbs. Back wom! What is that wom aw've talked so mich abeaut? Surelee mi wom were at Juiz, iv wife, childher, an' four walls could make it; an' thoose things are quite enough to make it here in th' owd teawn 'at seed me born. What makes o this difference? Is there summat in th' fabric ov Englishmen made fro th' never-forgetten soil they're bred on? Is it some lastin virtue o' this sweet heart-liftin moor-scented air, 'at once takken deep into th' lungs never

con lev body an' memory again? Is it some deeper mind-wovven pride an' love for kin an' native lond, coupled wi a mon's firm-set wish to howd fast by an' feel hissel worthy ov his own folk an' his own place?

Aw'll give it up misel, bein a betther hond at cardin nor metaphysics; but there were no mistake abeaut one thing—no spot i' th' wide world beside Rachda were good enough to wipe mi feet on afther that terrible week when o creation had looked like slurrin fro undher me.

Afore we could get sided up an' clear't off, one o' their little Brazil revolutions happen't. Nobbut abeaut three month back aw'd yerd ov a republican lecthurin chap bein punced eaut o' Rio, where nobry could be fund to hearken a word again th' emperor; an' neaw, lo an' behowd, this same emperor, Don Pedro, were quietly pension't off, tuthri objectin folk shot, an' a bran new Republic set up i' quicksticks. A native o' Juiz were made a Government officer o' some mak; so we'd banners flyin, fireworks whuzzin abeaut (they con do nowt i' Brazil beaut sendin rockets up), free dinners o' thripe an' chipped pottatoes cooked in th' London an' Paris styles, an' general stirrins ov a lively stamp. Sich thrifles as revolutions made smo difference to us afther what we'd just gwone through—we'd no intherist i' sich babby-wark; but th' disturbance made us loise three days i' startin, an' durin that time we'd a visit fro Ferguson an' a letther fro Tom.

Th' Scotchman londed first. He'd bin wi us nobbut two days afore, takkin lev on us, an' sattlin wi Lucy to come o'er to Lancashire an' wed her theere i' less nor two year. He'd fain ha persuaded us to consent to their gettin wed first thing, an' carried mi pratty lass up into th' hills wi him. Aw didn't see it i' that leet misel—they were full young to couple, an' mi wise yead couldn't bide to think neaw o' levin a chilt o' mine in that fascinatin but dyeadly counthry, wheere nobbut three year back aw'd looked forrad wi satisfaction to th' chance o' spendin o my days. So far reaund mi views had shifted: an' just as once nowt but Brazil looked possible for me to live in, so neaw aw felt 'at wick or dyead, rich or beggar't, no lond but mi own could ever again bring content to mi heart. Yet aw've olez had a charicther for bein thoughtful an' far-seein, foo as aw've olez known misel to be; an' bi puttin o' these happenins together aw've larn't to misthrist ony wise mon 'at feels hissel quite sure ov a thing, knowin weel enough 'at a twinge o' toothwartch or a shoot ov east wynt may turn his brainpon wrong end up ony minute.

"Nowe, Ferguson," aw said, wi mi bottom jaw set square. "It's noane a bit o' use botherin. Iv Lucy's woth havin hoo's woth waitin for an' fotchin. Tak her into Scotland iv tha will, but ne'er spend thi wynt thinkin tha con talk me into levin her here."

So th' poor young things had mixed their tears, swearin everlastin faith to one another, as sweethearts are olez ready to do, an' then Watty had crawled away to his wark.

We o stared to see him back among us so soon, an' wondher't what made him look so solemn.

"I must have a private word with you, Mr. Garrside," he said; so we walked eaut together, an' aw soon fund mi knowledge grooin fast. We crossed th' garden, wandherin into a plot o' spare greaund close to, where we rambl't to an' again for awhile. Watty started off bi axin,

"Mr. Garrside, do ye consider me to be an honest man?"

"That's a foolish question," aw said. "Aw've promised to give my lass to thee, an' iv that isn't a good enough certificate for thee, say what moore tha wants."

"'Twas I advised ye to buy the shares in our mine, sir. 'Twas on the faith of my worrd ye bought, and never man in this worrld felt more certain of the future than I that ye would reap twenty-fold what ye had sown. For, working there as I have done, knowing the men in charge, and checking the turrnover from the stampers, I durrst have staked ma life on the truth of the balance-sheets. And yet I was sairly deceived."

Th' poor lad looked up at me so pitiful 'at aw felt co'd on to shake his hond an' speighk a comfortin word.

"Tell me a plain tale, lad. Aw con bide it. There's above a theausan peaund o' my hard-won brass staked on yon mine, but iv it's gwone it's gwone."

"That's yet to be proved, sir. All I know is the treasurer's missing, and there's talk in the mine of the lode working out. The head engineer went to Rio Grande on leave a forrtnight ago, and it's thought he'll be seen nae mair in these parrts. The shares have dropped fifty per cent."

"They'll stop when th' bottom's reighched," aw said. "Well, what arta beaun to do—go back to thi wark, or pack thi luggage an' come wi us?"

"There's nae gude stopping here longer. I'll gang wi ye."

We went in then to breighk th' bad news as gently as we could. Lucy smil't to find her sweetheart were to go wi us, an' Alice talked as iv th' loss ov a theausan peaund were a simple fleabite to sich millionaires as us.

Ferguson thrail't off in a bit to fot his thraps, promisin to get back again i' two days, so we'd quietness for th' rest o' that afthernoon. Next mornin this letther o' Tom's turn't up. He wrote a lot o' cheerful stuff abeaut his wife an' their wedded

happiness, wi gossip consarnin mony a friend, an' toard th' finish he slipped this comfortin bit o' news in.

> "I am sorry to hear that the Woodrock Spinning Company, in which your capital is invested, has just declared a loss of five thousand pounds on the past quarter's working, supposed to have been caused by the old game of gambling in futures. As the concern was in a bad state before, there is poor chance of dividends being paid for a while to come, and, of course, the shares are unsaleable now at any price. What a pity you did not sell out last year, as you once thought of doing, and invest the proceeds in Watty's gold mine!"

"It is a pity, for sure!" aw said, when aw'd read o this eaut to Alice an' Lucy. "Well, wife, it's o gwone neaw, so we'n nowt to be freeten't on no moore. We are o wick, that's one comfort."

"We'n brass enough to pay th' passage back," hoo said; "that's o we needen to bother abeaut. There's good friends at t'other end, thank God!"

"Tha'rt reet, wife, an' aw were wrong. Everything's noane lost."

Young Harry had bin sittin quiet in a nook, takkin o in, so neaw he oppen't his meauth.

"Aw con help to keep yo, fayther, when we getten back to Rachda. Aw con make as mich as ten shillin a week theere, an' mi mother con have it o obbut sixpence."

"Do you want the sixpence for toffy?" Lucy axed, rubbin his yure deawn into his e'en.

"Ne'er mind!" says Harry. "Aw want dhrawin papper an' pencils, an' crayons, an' sich like."

"Hello, young un!" aw said, wondherin what were in th' lad's mind. "Has some idea sthricken thee o ov a sudden?"

"It sthruck me a good while sin, aw con tell yo. Aw'm for bein a dhraughtsman afore mony year."

"That's reet Harry," aw said, smilin at his sayrious looks. "Surelee th' owd brids con rest in a bit, iv th' chickens are sich bowd crowers. Aw'll see tha gets thi papper an' pencils, lad."

Next day Ferguson coome, bringin a mule to carry his box, an' one moore day seed us fairly started on th' journey wom. There were no tears dhropped o'er th' job noather.

But ill luck followed us as a burr sticks in a fleece. Afore we geet to Rio aw fell poorly misel, flushed up like a fire, an' gated ramblin i' mi talk. Next mornin a docthor had to be getten, an' he ordher't us o off to a cooler spot eautside th' teawn, where we'd to tarry for tuthri week. So it happen't at th' boat we should ha sailed by went beaut us, carryin letthers to expectin friends awom, filled wi bad news o' that fortin-huntin foo, Lijah Garside.

IX.—Th' Fortin Fund.

A tall, thin, weshed-eaut lookin chap sit on a verandah at Ponto de Caju one sunny afthernoon. His yollow face were hawve hud i' breawn whiskers, a sthraw hat cover't his yead, shadin two big sunken e'en, white cotton clooas lapped his shrunken body an' limbs. Close to him sit a woman, good-lookin yet, though her motherly face showed mony a line scrat bi Care's finger, a quiet smile o' content in her e'en, her hond fast locked in his. A bonny fleawer-sprinkl't garden spread reaund 'em, an a bit fur off they could see th' blue ocean curlin up a low shore wi never-restin swing. Soon a plump rosy-cheeked lass coome wandherin up, sit her deawn too, an' geet howd o' th' chap's t'other hond, an' next minute a curly-yeaded young fellah jumped on to th' verandah rails, balancin theere wi danglin legs an' singlet flyin loase in th' wot air.

"It's pleasant to see ye out again, Mr. Garrside," this last comer says, fillin his pipe as he swung on his pyerch. "How are ye feelin by noo?"

"Hardly i' wrostlin fettle yet," aw said. "But aw'm thankful to find misel wick an' mi wits i' gear again, for it's been a rough-an'-tumble job this time reaund."

"Ye'll be thanking these two nurrses for that," says Watty. "I wouldn't objaict to fall ill myself if I could be so carefully tended. Harrdly a worrd have I got from Lucy this fortnight, so much business the girrl's had on her hand."

"You will hear enough of my tongue in a while," Lucy said. "Be satisfied."

"I'm no complaining, ye ken. And noo what's to hinder us starting for the auld country before it's lang?"

"Nowt, aw hope. Alice, is there as mich brass left as'll pay th' fares across?"

Mi wife flushed up an' thried to put me off. "Don't bother abeaut that just neaw, Lijah. Get a bit sthronger, an' then we con talk it o'er."

"Bless thi heart, wife, aw'm sthrong enough for owt! Speighk up. There's some wage owin at th' mill yet, think on—we con soon write for it iv need be."

Aw felt two little honds turn wot an' thremble i' mine.

"There's a letther com'n," mi wife cheeped, as faint as a robin. "Watty went up to Juiz, but they wouldn't pay him, an' said they'd write i' due course, an' so it coome three days sin'."

Afther a bit moore persuadin Lucy brought me t' letther eaut. It were nobbut what aw'd expected—quather's wage forfeited for breighkin mi conthract, an' threats 'at there'd be some law flyin

afore long. Tuthri moore questions showed me 'at th' family stockin were gettin empty, an' set me thinkin we should ha to borrow brass to carry mi greight fortin wom.

"Aw mun slip deawn to th' English agent, an' iv he wain't foot up we mun write wom," aw were sayin, when up comes little Harry, an' cobs a hondful o' brass into his mother's appron.

"Are yo getten weel again, fayther?" he axed me, wipin his sweatin face. "We're o weary o' seein yo laid on yor back i' yon reawm."

"Mendin nicely, my lad. What's o this brass tha's brought?"

"It's mi week's wage," Harry says quite bowd. "Didn't yo know aw were wortchin? There'd ha bin nowt comin in but for me."

"That's reet, owd mon," aw said, feelin preaud o' mi lad an' pattin his yead for him. "Thee be independent an' addle thi keep. This brass 'll be useful enough, but we mun find a bit moore somewheere—another hundherd peaund or so."

"That's a lump!" Harry says. "It'll tak me a good while to make that at fifteen milreis a week."

We agreed wi him, an' chatther't a while abeaut different roads o' raisin brass, when young Watty put a quiet word in.

"What's to hinder me paying the passage money?"

"Becose it wouldn't be fair," aw said. "Beside, aw thought tha'd lost thi savins i' yon mine."

"All but two hunderrd pounds, sir—I've sae much siller left in ma pouch. 'Tis this way, ye see. If ye've to write hame it means waiting here three months. I'd fain be sailing sooner mysel, and I'd have Lucy's fare to pay, ye ken, for 'twouldn't do to go without ma girrl. Then, ye see, she wouldn't go without the mither, and the mither wouldn't start without you, so there's na ither way out o' the puzzle."

Th' lad's tale seaunded rezonable, so, knowin weel aw could pay him back when we londed awom again, aw consented to use his brass. So neaw th' packin-up fuss started o'er again, this time beaut hindhrance, an' a short week fund us steerin across th' restless weet wi noses sharp-set for England. Wi hearts risin every day we made leet o' th' long journey, sailin into Liverpool as lively as kittlins.

What gooins-on there were when we geet to Tom's heause, takkin 'em bi surprise, for nobry expected us so soon. They very near worried us, an' we o laughed an' snivell't together. Never were sich a fine young husband as Tom, nowheere could be sin a bonnier, wiser little wife nor Emma, no cottage could be moore comfortable, clen, an' breet nor theirs. Never could be a happier getherin nor moore thankful hearts i' this world o' care. An' when we'd sit a while what should Emma do but slip upstairs, come deawn again wi a little warm bundle o' shawls in her arms, set it

carefully on mi knee, an' theere were a new babby blinkin up at me wi reaunt e'en an' never a tooth in it yead. My heart gav a jump.

"God bless thi pratty face," aw said. "Aw'm a gronfayther, aw do believe. Sithee, Alice!"

But mi wife had howd o'th' chilt afore mi words were spokken, an' Lucy, hangin o'er, helped her to squeeze an' kiss their new relation whol aw began to think there'd be nowt left on it when they'd done.

"We have given him your name, father," says Tom, lookin a bit sheepish.

"Tak care he doesn't groo up as big a foo as me then," aw said. "Iv there's ony luck i' names he'll be no betther for havin mine festen't on him. An' whatever tha does teighch him to stop awom, for once he gets a roamin sperrit undher his ribs he's booked to suffer."

When th' baggin were sided me an' mi wife set off to find Squire, for aw couldn't ha slept comfortable beaut seein mi owd mate. He'd flitted again into sich a grand heause 'at we felt very near freeten't o' knockin at his dur. We followed a carriage road windin up a big garden, walked through a greenheause full o' fancy plants, geet up some steps, an' then coome to a bell-hondle.

"This con ne'er be Squire's heause," Alice says, thremblin. "We'd best go back an' sper again."

"Aw believe we're wrong misel," aw said, "but neaw we are here there's no harm i' axin."

So aw rang th' bell. A lad wi buttons on his jacket coome, an' aw axed him iv Squire Marcroft lived theere.

"Councillor Marcroft, sir? Yes, sir. What name, sir?"

"Let's goo," Alice whisper't i' mi ear. "This is some greight mon's heause."

"Ceauncillor!" aw said, mi yure stonnin up. "It con ne'er be Squire, that's a sure thing. Aw've no visitin cards here, lad, but carry this to thi maisther an' see iv he owns it."

Aw gav him a Spenish gowd piece off mi watch chen, one Squire had gien me in th' owd days at Marzagâo. He'd scrat his initials on an' cogged th' edges o reaund, an' aw felt sure he'd know his hondiwark again when he seed it.

Th' lad went inside, levin us stonnin theere, an' next minute we yerd a sheaut as iv a bull had brokken loase. Then Squire coome sthridin eaut in his shirt sleeves, howdin a glue brush i' one hond, his yure flyin abeaut o roads.

"Where is he? Where the hangment is he? Bi gum, it is Lijah sure enough! Aw knew it mut be! Come in, tha thin-ribbed fleycrow! What arta stonnin theere for? Eh, Mrs. Garside, aw'm as fain as a weshed collier! Come off that dur-step, do!"

He poo'd us inside, fair huggin us in his excitement, kissed Alice, mauled us weel wi warm glue off his brush, an' shoved us afore him into a comfortable sittin-reawm.

"Tell thi missis hoo's wanted, lad," he says, so young buttons said "Yessir," an' made a bow as iv he were practisin dancin.

"Here, noane o' that!" Squire sheauted, lookin like cobbin his brush at th' polite sarvant. "Ston up like a mon an' keep a civil tongue i' thi yead—that's o aw want fro thee. There'll be no doancin dolls i' this heause whol aw pay th' rent."

Buttons bowted, Squire cobbed his brush into a glue pot on th' harstone, an' brasted off again.

"Sit yo deawn! Poo yor clooas off! Make yorsel awom, do! Aw feel as if Whissunday an' Kesmas had let bwoth together, an' iv we don't make a neet on't this beaut aw'm no judge o' curran loave. Han yo lost yor tongues or heaw? What the hangment's to do?"

"We're waitin whol yo'n finished, Squire," mi wife laughed.

"Why, aw've hardly spokken at o yet! Neaw that's just yo women up an' deawn—yo mun olez have th' last word, an' once yo starten nobry else has time to cheep. Poo yor cheers up—that's it!"

In a minute Susan coome in, a different woman otogether fro what aw'd ever known her. Hoo were donned plain an' tidy, showed noane ov her fine-manner't nonsense, an' gav us a welcome quiet an' hearty, showin hersel anxious to make us comfortable.

"Did onybody ever see sich a mess?" hoo axed, lookin reaund her an' laughin. "Aw'm fair fast what to do with this chap o' mine, he's that rackless an' yeadsthrong, an' sin' he started larnin music he makes moore litther an' dirt nor a whole heauseful o' childher."

There were a mess—hoo were reet enough theere—an' aw'd known th' time when hoo'd ha flown into a rivin passion at th' seet on't, cheerful as hoo took it neaw. A Merican orgin stood in a nook, o th' inside works takken eaut, some laid on cheers some on th' floor. A table were full o' reeds, springs, bits o' wood, rows o' keighs, cowd chisels, hommers, brace-bits, planes, knives, files, and so on. A pair o' vice were rear't again th' marble mantelpiece, an' th' gluepot looked very weel on th' honsome harstone o' painted tiles.

Aw began to undherston what were up, an' towd Squire he were th' first mon aw'd sin larnin music wi a glue-brush, so he explained things.

"Th' orgin geet damp in it inside, dost see, Lijah, an' th' reeds gav o'er cheepin, so aw poo'd it i' lumps, thinkin a practical mechanic should manage that job reet enough. But it's pottherin me, an' aboon a bit too."

"Tha looks short o' tools," aw said, laughin at him as he sit scrattin his chin o'er th' tableful o' rubbish. "Why not tak th' bits to a machine shop where there's a good thravellin crane an' plenty o' scaffoldin planks?"

"Aw'll wrostle it yet," he says, shovin th' stuff away wi his elbow. "Aw'm gettin into th' plan on it neaw."

"Tha's some likely fingers for playin on t' thing when it's gear't up."

"They'll ha to do," Squire said, spreadin eaut his greight honds, marked bi mony a hommer an' chisel knock. "Aw've no moore. They wouldn't fit between th' black keighs at first, but aw filed th' ivories deawn a bit, so neaw there's reawm for mi claws onywheere. Aw con play 'God save the Queen' wi two fingers, iv aw happen to catch th' reet dominoes to start off. That bothers me a bit—but aw'll make a pencil-mark on th' beggars when aw find em again."

"What's this smith's vice for an' o this engineerin tackle? Is it to tune up wi?"

"Nowe. It's too hard wark for me threddlin wind in. Aw've sich long legs, tha sees, 'at when mi feet are on t' threddles mi cheer's too fur off for me to reighch th' keighs, so aw'm dodgin up some blowin gear—a weighted chen runnin o'er a pulley bindin on a spring."

"Hearken yo theere!" Susan laughed. "Con he be gradely reet, done yo think? Come, let's have this table emptied an' aw'll put some supper on."

"That's reet, lass," Squire said; "an' bring some ale up, for iv there is a dhry job it's bein a professor o' music. Neaw Lijah, let's yer thi news. What makes thee look so clemmed an' yollow?"

"Aw've had th' fayver an' tuthri moore ailments, an' nearly lost mi wife beside."

"Tha'd ha larn't summat iv that had happen't. Well, go on. That's very good so fur. Heaw mony theausan peaund hasta made?"

"Aw've bin forced to borrow brass to come back."

"Tha'll be for thryin again next year, then? Tha knows there's no shop like Brazil for makin brass."

"Plague me no moore, Squire—aw cawn't ston it. Aw've hardly a penny to co mi own, an' there's o th' world to start on again; we're clen ruinated this time."

"Yo'd best get summat t'eight whol yo'n a chance, then," Squire said; an' as th' supper were laid we took his advice.

"That mon o' thine co'd thee a ceauncillor," aw said in a bit. "Is that thrue?"

"Aw cawn't deny it, Lijah. There's hardly ony tellin what a chap may lower hissel to, is there? They would have it, with

their gibberidge abeaut native sense, practical knowledge, sich folk as me bein wanted bi th' teawn, an' o maks. Aw'll tell thee what"—here he bent across th' table end to whisper i' mi ear —"iv aw'm foo enough they'll make a mayor on me yet wi a dog-chen on. There's o sorts o' throuble afore me. Neaw, Lijah, what arta beaun to do?"

"Start wortchin somewheere."

"Aw made thee a good offer a while back—it's oppen yet. Tha wortches i' no shop but mine."

"Aw con happen be some use to thee as a foreman."

"Come, let's ha noane o' thi sauce becose aw'm on th' Ceauncil. Tha knows weel 'at thee an' me mun olez ston on a level, an' aw couldn't gaffer o'er thee iv aw wanted. Aw've noather chick nor chilt—mi wife wain't object—pay for thi share iv tha'rt determin't to be stupid—but thy brains aw mun have, an' my partner tha mun be, or aw'll punce thee fro here to Owdham. So neaw tha knows!"

"Aw'm to find mi fortin awom, then, afther o."

Squire geet up, brought Alice to me, an' laid her hond i' mine. "Here's thi fortin—stick to it fast. Tha's done thi best to cob it away, an' iv that 'd happen't there'd be some sense in thi jabber abeaut ruination. Aw tell thee a good wife's th' best fortin this world howds for a mon—give him that an' he's independent ov o th' gowd ever minted."

"Squire," aw said, "thi talk's as thrue as gospel. Tha makes me feel like a schoolad wi' his lesson just larn't. Tha'rt wiser nor me, an' a betther mon beside, for there's summat womanish undher my ribs when there's throuble to feight. Aw'll ne'er crave for brass no moore."

"Brass!" says Squire. "Iv we cawn't make barrowfuls o' divi wi thy yead an' my muscle aw'll never taste ale again! Fill yor glasses an' tay-cups, an' let's sup good health to th' new firm o' Marcroft an' Garside, engineers, machine fettlers, repairs on th' shortest notice, owd scrap swapped for new frames, an' o ordhers attended to first thing bi hee-class technical-schoo-an'-college thrained professors."

Alice gav me a sly look an' axed, "Hadn't yo best put a word in abeaut experience i' foreign counthries?"

"Iv we done," aw said, laughin fro a leet heart, "it'll be a line at th' bottom—

Nowt no moore to do wi Brazil."

WHITE HOUSE, BLACKSTONE EDGE.

LEETIN BLACKSNEDGE.

Aw happen't to look in at th' White Heause one Sethurday neet when aw'd getten dhry wi gawpin abeaut on th' moorside whol th' edge o' dark, an' fund th' londlord blowin one o th' Local Boardmen up, becose they wouldn't be persuaded to set a row o' gaslamps up th' broo.

Aw'd a yead full ov o maks o' things just then, for aw'd bin lettin a rook ov owd thraditions run through mi mind like wayther runs reaund a canel bywesh—just makin a curve fro th' deep lodge o' memory to slip back again unwasted—an' thinkin abeaut th' greight historical chaps 'at 'd walked up that hill afore me; so aw took little notice o' th' talk whol aw yerd mi own name mention't.

"There's this mon here," Pether were sayin, shakin his neighve at me; "*he'll* be breighkin his neck some day, for he's rootin abeaut these moors at o sorts o' times. Some neets he comes preawlin o'er th' tops just afore turnin-eaut time; or if it sthrikes him he'll be here afore th' dinner's ready, talkin abeaut ramblin twenty mile across into Yokshire or some sich lies; or he'll come wandherin up toard baggin-time, an' then there'll be no stirrin him whol long afther dark. He'll as sure be kil't as ever owt were iv yo don't rear us some gaslamps."

Th' Boardman looked at me, an' said, "You won't charge your funeral expenses to *him*, I suppose, if any accident should happen?"

"There's no tellin," aw towd him. "That's a riddle aw've little need to bother *my* yead wi. Done yo make Pether pay rates for gasleets?"

"He pays the general rate, of course—it includes lighting."

"Bi th' mass! but aw should ston eaut again that. Why, there's no gaslamps within a mile an' a hawve o' this heause 'at ever aw've sin. Nay! it's noane fair he should pay for other folks' gas, shuz heaw 't be."

"It would be a dangerous precedent to allow him special advantages over other ratepayers. You can never be sure where that sort of thing will end."

"Yo'n no objection to me havin o th' special disadvantages," th' lonlord said. "But iv yo getten howd o' th' brass aw guess yo're reet. There's no tellin what thrade it wouldn't bring here iv we could have th' gas we han to pay for."

Blacksnedge, Blackstonedge.

Th' Boardman winked at me an' said, "I really believe it would pay you to put up a few lamps at your own expense."

"Mun aw keep th' roads i' repair for yo too?" Pether axed him; an' off they set fratchin again for ever so long. Aw geet weary o' their talk, an' hutched comfortably into a nook at th' hobend, lettin mi yead run off into owd times again, when aw yerd a lusty baritone eautside singin away.

"Knights of the Cross, lads of the moss,
Lasses fair as ever were seen,
In ribbon and feather, this holiday weather,
Lightly foot it on Sherwood Green.

Blow with a will, Mutch o' the mill,
Time our heels to thy whistle keen!
Summer's a-rustle—with sport and bustle
We'll follow the sun round Sherwood Green."

A firm foot seaunded on th' lobby flags, an' a weel-made honsome chap coome swaggerin forrad, carryin a bow longer nor hissel. He were donned i' close-fittin green woollen clooas belted reaund his middle, wore shoon up to his knees, an' a fither in his cap.

"By St. Jerkin of the Wold!" says this pottato, cobbin his bow clattherin deawn onto th' bench; "I would rather encounter a full stoup of brown October than the wealthiest abbot of this fair county."

"Heaw do, Robin!" aw said. "Aw were just thinkin abeaut thee a bit sin'. Tha'd make little profit eaut ov abbots neawadays —they'n larn't moore wit nor carryin their brass abeaut wi 'em. Bring him a pint ov ale, Pether."

"Is he a rushcart chap, or what?" th' lonlord axed, bringin t' dhrink in. "Threepence, maisther."

"An' thou pleadest to me for pence thy labour will be ill rewarded, brave host," says Robin, clappin Pether on th' back wi a welt 'at nearly upset him. "Fetch a more generous mutchkin of ale, friend; this is but a dewdrop in a forester's mouth."

"Sup away, lad!" aw said. "Aw'll pay for thee, iv it's nobbut for owd acquaintance."

"Pay!" t' visithor said. "Now, by the trysting oak of Barnesdale, this is too much!"

"It's a bad thing to get too much," th' Boardman said, chucklin at his own humour.

"Particlar where there's no gaslamps," says Pether, an' th' chucklin stopped.

"Pay!" th' quare customer went on. "If in all your historical records you can find a trace of payment ever made by me I will stand to be shot by the best archer within your bounds!"

"Tha'd be safe enough, lad," aw said. "We could kill thee sooner wi hawve-breeks nor arrows."

"And shall it be said, marry, that now in merry England I am to be pestered for pence! Never! as my name is ——"

"What is it?" sheauted th' Boardman.

"Ah! what's thi name?" Pether axed.

"Robin Hood!"

"Bi gacks it is!" said a voice at th' dur. "Aw took thee for a pace-egger." A womly-lookin owd chap coome forrad, pooin a cheer up to th' fire. "Tha'rt a wharlock, aw'll uphowd teh," he said to Robin, an' then turned to Pether. "Lonlort, is there ony throttle-weet i' this biggin? Aw'm as dhry as a kex."

"Is there ony brass stirrin?" Pether axed, "Iv tha'rt sich another customer as th' last aw want nowt to do wi thee."

"Brass!" th' owd chap chuckl't, lookin reaund at us wi a whimsical twist. "Uddzo! There mun be some toard Rachda, for they'n scruttl't aboon fourscore peaund together to bonk up mi grave weh."

"Bi gum!" aw brasted eaut, "aw thought it mut be thee! Tha'rt Tim Bobbin iv ever onybody were! Fot a barrel in, Pether; quarts are no use to-neet."

Th' Boardman looked fleyed eaut ov his wits. "Tim Bobbin!" he mutther't, oppenin his meauth as wide as th' hinges ud let him. "I thought he was dead."

"Naught o' th' sort!" aw said. "He'll ne'er be dyead; Tim wain't—he's getten past that."

"And who may this Tim Bobbin be?" Robin axed. "Meseems he is marvellous like a sturdy friar of my acquaintance."

Tim looked at him, sceawlin a bit. "There'll be one sthroke o' difference between me an' ony acquaintance o' thine."

"What is that, marry?"

"Why, marry," Tim says, winkin at me, "aw wear Saddle'oth glooves."

"I understand thee not," Robin said, givin his moustache a twirl. "Expound, thou unfrocked clerk!"

"Soon an' sanner," says Tim. "Aw keep mi honds i' mi own breeches pockets, dost see? Thy mates had theirs i' somebry else's mostly."

Here Pether brought some ale in, so we o supped once an' started talkin i turns, like play acthors.

Tim (*warmin his honds*).—Aw feel th' cowd wynt a bit weh bein eaut on't so long. It fair maes meh wacker! It's some dark, too, comin up this hill.

Pether.—It may weel be dark when there's no gettin these Local Boards to do nowt. Iv it'd bin a road-mendin job, wi a ride reaund for inspection once a year, they'd ha looked to it long sin'."

Wharlock, wizard. *Wacker*, shiver.

TIM.—Couldn't teh shap a brunfire or summat, to show deawn th' slawpe a piece?

ROBIN.—Or a line of varlets to mark the path. That was our fashion of finding friends or warning off dishonest enemies.

TIM.—I' Gadlins! That shads Wrynot, an' Wrynot shad the dule! There'd be some sport when *tha* let among thieves! A good lanthron were thought useful i' my day, an' sharp chaps could pyke a road bi th' glint o' their clog-irons an' starleet.

WEIGHVER.—But it's gas they wanten now.

TIM.—Gas? What the hectum's that?"

BOARDMAN.—Gas is a general name for elastic aëriform fluids. The particular species referred to now is the carburetted hydrogen gas distilled from coal, which, by combustion, produces a brilliant light.

WEIGHVER.—Hear, hear! Goo up one.

PETHER.—That's heaw he talks to th' Board, aw guess. No wondher gas is so bad to get howd on iv it's sich far-larn't stuff as that.

ROBIN.—Pierce me with a clothyard shaft if I wot the meaning of all this.

TIM.—Same here, says Bodle.

WEIGHVER.—Get back to yor cracks i' th' greaund, owd brids, an' ne'er bother yor brains wi thryin to undherston what's gooin on i' th' world neaw. Yo con ne'er gawm it beaut startin fro th' schoo again.

TIM.—Well, shouldn't aw be awom theere, thinks teh?

WEIGHVER.—Yigh—but wi a difference. Tha were a schoo-maisther once, but tha'd be th' bottom scholar neaw. We'n getten some fawse sin tha left us.

TIM.—Dule steaund teh! Aw'm uncoth fain to yer it. There were nowt mich but foos once ov a day.

ROBIN (*clappin th' Boardman's knee*).—What ho, my comely citizen! Hast ever a plump bag of merks about thee?

BOARDMAN (*shiftin fur off*).—I have nothing but a few shillings for immediate expenses. Rates and rents are too high for us to save much here.

ROBIN.—Rates? Rents? Beshrew me if a plain woodsman may comprehend this jargon! (*Dhraws a keen huntin knife.*) Pass hither thy silver, citizen; or by St. Winnibald of the West thou shalt have rents enough and to spare!

BOARDMAN (*hutchin back*).–Help! Help! Hold him, landlord!

PETER.—Will yo see abeaut thoose gaslamps iv aw do?

BOARDMAN.—Anything, Peter! I promise anything! He's throttling me! Help!

(*Tim jumps up, lays howd o' Robin, an' wrostles wi him. Th' Boardman fo's back on a bench, short o' wynt.*)

Shads, beats.

PETHER.—Howd on! This'll do noane. No feightin i' this heause!

WEIGHVER.—Let 'em a-be, mon; they're nobbut two boggarts wrostlin. There'll be nowt brokken. Neaw Tim, owd breek; Mildhro for ever! Mind thoose pots!

BOARDMAN (*pantin*).—For God's sake take me out landlord! My life is in danger from that ruffian.

PETHER.—Yo con never get deawn th' hill bi yorsel i' th' dark. Iv yo'd nobbut rear't us tuthri gaslamps ——

ROBIN (*blowin hard*).—A murrain on thy stiff-built carcase! Shall a village yokel cope with Robin Hood!

TIM (*cobbin him into th' nook*).—Flop tha gwoes, greensauce! Lie still, or aw'll bant thi ribs! Sich urchons as thee looken reet enough felleyin up an' deawn i' books, but there's no greight stink ov honesty abeaut th' best on yo.

(*Tim sits him deawn. Oliver Cromwell looks in at th' dur, donned in a loase cloak, ridin boots an' sleauched billycock, wi' swort an pistils stickin in his brode leather belt.*)

OLIVER.—What ungodly revel is here toward!

ROBIN (*gets up swearin*).—A malison on thee, clown! Thou hast left a dinge in my ribs.

TIM.—Tha should behave thisel. Who's this rednosed black-lookin turmit at th' dur? *Are* yo pace-eggers, or not? Aw ne'er let on wi sich a gang afore.

OLIVER.—Begone, ye unseemly brawlers, and seek to reduce by self-denial and secret meditation your tendencies towards mirth and junketings! Host! look well to my horse—he stumbled in the dark, and I fear his knees have suffered.

PETHER.—There's no wondher at him fo'in. Yo see, we con get nobry to set us gaslamps up here ——

OLIVER.—Silence, sirrah! Let the Lord be as a lamp to thy feet and a light in thy paths, and set about thy duties with a still tongue.

TIM.—What bowd gamcock's this? There'll be moore wrostlin afore long, or the dule's in't! (*Spits on his honds*).

WEIGHVER.—Ne'er heed him, Tim. He used to be a brewer once.

TIM (*sattlin back on his bench*).—Oh, well! That's another mak o' porritch. Aw took him for Guy Fawkes.

OLIVER.—Away, ye vain babblers! Projects of weight and import seethe in my massive brain, and I would be alone. Retire, and peace be with ye. (*Aside*). Until my cannon disturb it!

ROBIN (*catchin up his bow*).—Now, by silver Trent, I budge not an ell at thy bidding! One blast on this horn will pit against thee odds thou little wottest of! Have a care, thou grim-faced varlet!

TIM.—We con sattle this mon beaut horn-blowin. Put that wythin deawn an' poo thi neighves eaut.

OLIVER.—'Sdeath! Does no man stir at my command! Without, there! Harrison! Barbone! Who waits?

PETHER.—Aw do misel, i' general. Did yo co for summat?

OLIVER (*gettin mad an' cobbin his cloak off*).—Nay, then! If my orders are to be thus set at naught I will even put my own hand to the plough. Out with ye! or I smite hip and thigh, and spare not!

TIM.—Tha brags hard for sich a bantam. Traunce off, afore aw lond teh a wherrit.

WEIGHVER.—Done yo tak us for th' Long Parliament, or what?

When aw axed him that Oliver lost his temper otogether, an' laid howd on me to rive me off mi pyerch. He gav me sich a stirrin as wakken't me up, to find it were th' lonlort shakin me an' noane Cromwell at o.

"Come, come!" Pether says. "Tha'rt for sleepin o neet aw think.

"Have aw bin asleep?" aw gaped, reausin mysel. "Has Tim gwone?"

"Tim who?" th' lonlort axed. "Tha's bin snorin hard this last heaur, whether tha's bin asleep or not. This Board chap's waitin for thee to be company deawn th' broo."

"Where's Robin?" aw said, starin reaund me, for aw'd sin th' bowd eautlaw so plain a minute afore 'at aw couldn't undherston him vanishin that road. "Hast put Oliver horse i' th' stable?"

Pether looked at me very quare. "Yo're ramblin abeaut summat. There's bin nobry here nobbut us three."

Th' Boardman nudged him, whisperin, "The poor man hardly seems right in his head. Perhaps I had better not trust myself alone with him."

"Start off bi yorsel, then," th' lonlort said, chucklin. "Iv we nobbut getten one o' th' Board lost or lamed there'll be electhric leets up this moor i' tuthri week, say nowt o' gas."

"Come on gaffer," aw said, gapin yet. "Let's get deawn into th' world again."

So we wandher't off deawn th' moor, findin th' neet dark enough an' no mistake. Th' Boardman kept his own side o' th' road, as iv he hardly knew what to expect fro me, an' aw put some wildish questions to him just to freeten him a bit; but he seemed to make his mind up 'at aw were nobbut a harmless mak ov a lunatic afther o' an' we were good friends when we reighched th' gaslamp 'at marks th' limit o' Local Board civilisation.

Then th' Boardman dhrew in a deep seauk o' wynt, an' said,

"Now we have no need to fear either ghosts or thieves. Certainly gaslight is something to be thankful for."

Wythin, a flexible branch. *Traunce*, trudge. *Wherrit*, a blow.

"Look up yon," aw said, turnin him toard th' moor, risin like a wole o' solid darkness. Far up th' hill a spark o' leet were hangin, favvourin a smo yollow star—very like fro Pether's lanthron as he stirred abeaut his fowt festenin up for th' neet.

"Yes, I can just see it," he said, an' were turnin again to go forrad when aw catched him bi th' arm, axin iv that speck o' candle-blaze had put nowt into his mind.

"Why," he says, laughin, "I suppose our friends up yonder must find themselves much inconvenienced for want of better lighting."

"'Specially when yo maken 'em pay for summat they cawn't get," aw said. "But is that o yon spark says to yo?"

"Yes."

"Well, aw guess iv yo were a fanciful chap yo'd be little use on a Local Board; but there's summat woth noticin abeaut this job, iv aw weren't too sleepy to hommer it eaut. We're stonnin on th' edge o' th' modhern world here, done ye see; cross this line an' yo're back i' th' owd days again. Below us there's every comfort brass con buy or brains plan: above us—hello! Pop gwoes thi candle, Pether, an' off tha bowts to bed!—above us, aw say, there's darkness an' danger, simple nathural ways o' life, hardship, dhremless sleep, owd-fashion't days, an' quiet neets. Heaw plain this division o' leet an' dark shows us th' difference between owd times an' new! Five hundherd year sin' o England were as dark as that moorside, wi happen some dim shine ov hope, like Pether's candle, stirrin among th' blackness ov ignorance an' oppression. To-day our island is illuminated by the intellectual lamps of awaking reason and growing justice—before long to brighten into the electric blaze of equal rights and unselfish humanity."

Aw happen't to look at th' Boardman, an' seed his meauth wide oppen an' his e'en stickin eaut ov his yead. "Good heavens!" he gasped in a minute. "*The man is talking English!!!*"

"Were aw for sure?" aw said. "Well, it shan't happen again to-neet. But con yo see what aw'm dhrivin at?"

"Not I!" says he, settin off deawn th' road. "I never talked to such a rambling old fellow in my life. You will be in Prestwich before long."

"Let's hope not," aw said. "Aw s' happen mend again wi time an' care. Well, yo'll see th' Board abeaut leetin this hill? Yo promised Pether, yo known, when Robin Hood were throttlin yo ——"

Th' Boardman were off like a rocket deawn a side lone, an' it sthruck me then—too lat, as usal—aw were mixed up i' mi dhrem yet, an' talkin stuff 'at seaunded to him like th' ravins ov a lunatic. But th' chap met ha said good neet, surelee.

BEN RAMSDEN.

I.

At twenty year owd Ben Ramsden were as smart a lad as needs to be sin. He wove i' th' cotton, makin a good wage, mindin his wark, lookin forrad to doin greight things i' time to come. For he'd read, had Ben, an' studied, an' gwone reglar to a neet-schoo; th' upshot ov o that bein 'at he felt fit to get on, an' were determin't to do it. Bi way o' makin a short cut to prosperity, he geet wed, an' fund life happy enough for tuthri year; then it like dawned on him 'at brass were scarce an' wark taydious, an' he began wondherin iv he were beaun to run four looms o his life, an' iv so whether he should like it or not. Tuthri year moore fund him wi seven childher, an' quite satisfied 'at he could live to find hissel weary o' weighvin. He'd getten a habit, too, o' spendin his neets at th' aleheause, to get eaut o' th' road ov his noisy childher an' busy wife; rayther a quare thing, for as a young chap he'd olez looked forrad to long comfortable heaurs at his own fireside wi a contented family abeaut him. When his first chilt—a lad—were born, he'd said so his wife,

"Ellen, aw myen doin summat wi this young fatsides. He mun ha larnin an' science to get him forrad i' th' world, an' aw'll watch him weel mysel, to make sure on him gooin reet."

"Don't kill him wi wark, bless him!" t' mother said. "Tha'd olez rayther big ideas, Ben, an' happen th' chilt cawn't come up to 'em."

"He'll be reet enough, tha'll see," Ben towd her. "He should be a bit like his fayther, an' iv so we s' get on weel enough together, shan't we?"

"Aw'm noane so sure abeaut that! Tha'rt reet enough whol tha con ordher everything thi own road, but tha con be middlin stupid when onybody else thries to shap things. Iv th' chilt doesn't happen to do o tha tells him it'll be wrong, aw know!"

"Make me eaut a bad un iv tha con!" Ben said, givin her a buss an' ticklin t' babby's cheek wi a finger. "Thee get thysel weel, get eaut o' bed, an' look afther thi nursin; aw'll see to t'other."

But afore t' young un were owd enough to profit bi t' fayther's care an' teighchin there were three moore babbies i' th' heause; an' when it were ready to start wi th' science classes brass had run so short 'at nowt but th' common day schoo larnin could be afforded. Wur nor that, Ben fund hissel noane quite as happy

among his family as he'd looked forrad to bein. T' childher made sich a din 'at they stopped him fro thinkin an' plannin heaw they were beaun to mend theirsel; an' some road his wife were olez scrattin at her wark, wi hardly time to speighk a word to him, dhroppin asleep iv hoo'd tuthri minutes to spare, an' complainin o' bein wortched to t' dyeath.

Ben ud be turned thirty year owd when it began sthrikin his thoughtful mind 'at things were wrong somewheere, to make life sich a hard job for a steady desarvin chap like him. He were noane beaut hopes yet o' gettin set on a betther footin, though his hopes ne'er showed him heaw to do owt but study an' grumble.

"There's no chance at o for a chap!" he'd tell his wife. "It's these greight folk 'at keepen sweighin us deawn an' stickin to th' brass. We'n no chance! Am aw ne'er to do nowt but scrat just to pay th' rent an' buy meight an' clogs?"

"Tha mun wait an' see," Ellen 'd say; "but there's no need to bother thi yead abeaut what's beaun to happen. We're reet enough up to neaw, an' t' childher 's comin on nicely toard helpin us. Give o'er plannin so mich, an' let things a-be."

"There's summat wrong, aw tell thee. There's no justice i' this mak."

"Aw wish tha'd sattle thi mind, Ben, an' tak moore notice o' t' childher. Tha never thinks to play wi 'em a bit, iv tha speighks it's nobbut to snap at 'em, an' it's no wondher they're gettin freeten't on thee. Tha reckons to be schamin to do us good, but aw'd sooner see thee moore sociable an' breet neaw nor sulkin twenty year to get betther off."

Ben felt sometimes he'd bin a bit ov a foo when t' missis talked to him that road, but kept gooin on i' th' same slot, olez lookin forrad. His lads an' lasses started levin t' schoo for t' facthry, makin moore brass for t' careful mother to spend, an' helpin her wi her never-endin wark; but there were no science scholars among 'em, an' their manners were nowt to swagger abeaut. They shapped to agree middlin weel wi one another, in a rough way, but their fayther were ill-satisfied to find they were noane a bit betther nor cliverer nor t' neighbours' childher, havin so long nursed a fancy 'at they'd turn eaut summat above th' common.

So things went on whol Harry, th' owdest lad, were nineteen year owd. There were four o' th' childher wortchin then, addlin two peaund a week among 'em. Th' family were like comfortably off for brass, so Ben were gettin th' habit o' spendin middlin on ale, missin odd days fro his wark neaw an' again, an' gettin rayther fresh sometimes.

One neet he coome wom fro th' aleheause, latish on, an' fund Harry waitin up for him.

"Time tha were i' bed, lad," he said, in a ordherin-abeaut sort o' style he olez used for t' childher.

"Aw wanted to have a word wi yo, fayther," Harry says, "an' there's no chance whol o th' young uns are runnin abeaut."

"What's to do neaw?" Ben axed, cobbin his cap on t' dhresser, an' walkin as sthraight as he could to his armcheer.

"Aw want to get wed."

"Get thi hippins off first," Ben grunted. "Tha'rt nobbut a babby yet, mon."

"Aw'm nineteen, an' weel able to keep mysel."

"Tha mun do a bit toard keepin me. Get to bed wi thee, an' talk o' this rubbish i' ten year or so."

"Well, aw'm tellin yo, fayther. We're beaun to get wed this summer; so yo'll know."

"Tha'rt beaun to do naught o' th' sort," Ben said. "Dost think aw've bin at o t' bother an' expense o' rearin thee to let thee scutther off neaw tha'rt addlin a bit o' brass? Iv aw yer another word abeaut weddin aw'll punce thee weel!"

"Not quietly, yo wain't," Harry said. "Two con play at that gam. Yo're makin brass enough beaut me, an' yo'n no business to ston i' mi leet. But aw'll talk it o'er wi yo some time else; yo're noane sober neaw."

Ben had just supped enough to make him stupid, an' Harry's independent talk made him mad. "Talk it o'er!" he brasted eaut. "We'll sattle this job beaut so mich talkin o'er! Aw'm thi fayther yet, aw expect, an' tha'll do as aw want iv tha'rt stoppin here. So neaw, which is it to be? Tarry wi us an' say nowt no moore abeaut this nonsense; or be stupid, an' eaut at that dur that gwoes!"

Harry nobbut laughed at him. "Are yo for turnin me eaut at midneet?"

"This minute! Tha'll come noane back, noather."

"It'll shuit me reet enough," Harry says. "A neet eautside wain't hurt me, an' aw s' get wed sthraight off iv aw'm turn't eaut; but aw don't fancy bein punced away fro wom that road. Aw've olez bin a stiddy quiet lad; yo'n no faurt to find wi me, aw know."

"Why, tha impident young prout! dost think aw'm beaun to argey wi thee o neet! Not another word!"

Harry geet up an' put his cap on. "Is it undherstood 'at aw mun never come back?"

"Aw'll punce thee weel iv tha does!"

"Punce!" says Harry wi scorn. "Look at me once, an' see iv aw'm a likely chap to ston puncin."

Ben looked as weel as he could wi his fuddl't e'en, an' were forced to think sich a lusty young chap met be awkart to meddle wi. Harry went on,

"Aw could ha liked to part friends, iv part we mun; but shap it yor own road. Yo'n noane bin a bad fayther to me, tak yo otogether, though yo ne'er oppen't yor heart to us nor thried to be

friendly as a fayther should. Yo're too mich lapped up i' yorsel o to be hanged."

"Aw should be owd enough to shap beaut thy teighchin," Ben said, howdin deawn his grooin passion. "Arta for gooin or stoppin?"

"Aw'd sooner stop, fayther."

"An' ha done wi this foolishness?"

"It's no use axin me to give yon lass up," Harry said. "Aw wain't loise her for o t' faythers ever born."

Ben geet up, set th' dur oppen, an' said, "This is thi road then. Get eautside!"

So th' son bowted, an' t' fayther crawl't up to bed as weel as he could. Fro that day Ben were a changed chap. He seed plain enough at last he'd no chance o' risin; for wi nowt but his childhers' wage to reckon on he could do no good beaut their consent. Loisin Harry, or rayther Harry's brass, for that were t' main considheration, fair knocked Ben o'er. He gav th' job up. Iv th' young uns were for levin him that road as they grew up he'd be like to keep gettin wur off every year, whol he finished off i' th' warkheause.

"Aw may as weel spend it whol aw have it," Ben thought, so he took a week on th' spree for a start. As he wanted somebody to oppen eaut his throubles to, beside plenty ov ale to sup, he sattl't on a dhrunken ne'er-do-weel co'd Ginger, stonnin him dhrink i' payment for his company, an' tellin sich pitiful tales ov his brokken hopes as made 'em bwoth cry when they'd supped enoo cowd pints to brew tears.

"Though aw cawn't see what tha's getten to bother abeaut," Ginger towd him. "There's young uns enough to see *thee* reet, an' tha'rt a foo to keep wortchin for nowt. There's nobbut sixpence a day difference between playin an' wortchin, an' th' player mostly gets it."

Ginger were what they co'n a philosopher; so long as he geet a yezzy life he were carless where th' brass coome fro, an' he ne'er made hissel ill wi frettin o'er other folks' throubles. But Ben's wife had noane so mich philosophy abeaut her. Hoo objected to seein their hard-addl't shillins cobbed away; so there were very soon some fo'in eaut between husband an' wife. Little grew to moore; t' childher, 'at were to ha done sich greight things were clemmed an' cleauted; Ellen began to find eaut heaw it felt to get knocked deawn an' left to pike hersel up; furnithur vanished an' never coome back; otogether t' Ramsdens were gettin into a bonny pickle.

"Aw'll put up wi this no longer, fayther," th' owdest lass said one Sethurday neet when Ben rowl't wom mazy wi fourpenny. "My wage is nobbut wasted here. Aw'll goo into lodgins an' keep mysel."

"Be off wi thee, selfish besom!" Ben hiccuped. "There'll happen be justice for a poor chap some time."

"Justice!" his wife sobbed, watchin him as he fell back i' dhrunken sleep. "When will there be ony for me, aw wondher? Aw could like thee to stop an' help me to feight it eaut, lass, but plez thysel. Tha'rt owd enough to walk thi own road."

"Let's o lev him, mother," t' lass whisper't, puttin her arm reaund Ellen's neck. "This life's killin yo fast. He'll ne'er do no good whol we keepen howdin wi him, but left to hissel he'll oather ha to wortch or dee."

"Aw'm his wife, tha knows," t' poor woman said. "Aw wed him for betther an' wur, an' aw'll stick it eaut to th' finish. He'll happen mend. It isn't 'at thi fayther's a bad chap; he nobbut taks too mich thought abeaut things."

"He thinks little ov his wife an' childher, aw know," t' daughther grumbl't. Hoo kissed her mother an' went—th' second brid gwone fro th' neest.

"We mun ha justice!" Ben maundher't, dhremin in his cheer, an' cobbin his arms abeaut. "Heaw long will they threighd us deawn yet! Justice!"

"Ah! sure!" Ellen says, wipin her weet e'en. "Justice 'll set thee reet, tha bonny sample!"

Hoo locked th' heause up, an' carted him off to bed.

II.

A parson were takkin a walk abeaut Rachda one Sethurday neet, sniffin up t' thick sooty air an' admirin th' dingy breek buildins, planned on' th' good owd design, two sthraight lines up an' one across, when he yerd a woman skrikin. Followin th' seaund he coome to a narrow enthry, an' gooin through it he fund hissel in a flagged yard wi dirty little cottages stuck reaund it. A creawd o' folk stood at one heause dur, hearkenin. O were dark inside. There were nowt to be sin, but as th' parson coome up he yerd a dull thumpin seaund; then th' woman skriked again, an' a little lass co'd eaut, "Oh, fayther! Oh, fayther!" in a voice to melt a stone.

"What is all this?" th' parson axed, a red spot comin on his cheeks an' fire shinin through his e'en, but nobry took ony notice on him. O th' creawd were laughin an' chattherin as iv nowt were, never stirrin a finger to help th' scremin woman.

"What is the matter here?" th' parson axed again, shovin his road toard th' heause dur, wondherin what mak ov heathens he'd let among.

A fat chap stonnin in his shirt-sleeves, wi his honds in his pockets, looked reaund an' said,

"It's nowt new—nobbut Ben Ramsden puncin his wife a bit."

BRONZE STATUE OF JOHN BRIGHT.

TOWN HALL SQUARE, ROCHDALE.

"He might be murdering her, judging by the woman's cries. Can't we stop this?"

"Ben's on his own clod," th' chap says, shakin his yead; "he's getten th' law wi him, an' we'd best bother noane, for he's middlin lungeous when he's bermy."

"Oh, fayther!" they yerd t' little lass skrike again. "Dunnot hit me! Dunnot hit me!"

"I'll stop this, law or no law," th' parson co'd eaut. "Come and help me, men; don't stand there like helpless cowards!"

He thried t' dur, fund it were locked, an' set o his sthrength to stir it, but couldn't shap. Seein he myent business th' fat chap an' another or two lent a hond, very soon brastin th' dur oppen among 'em. Th' parson let a match, an' geet a glint ov a sthrong-built fellah between forty an' fifty flyin at him. Th' fat chap an' his mates bowted, pooin t' dur to afther 'em, an' th' parson felt hissel catched in a pair o' sthrong honds an' whuzzed o' one side. He let another match, an' this time shapped to leet th' gas too, so he'd a chance o' lookin abeaut him. A thin, delicate-lookin woman lee moanin on th' floor, an' some little freeten't faces were peepin fro nooks where t' childher had hud theirsel.

"What dost want here?" Ben axed, wi a curse, steadyin hissel again t' dhresser.

Th' parson took no notice on him, but bent o'er Ellen, axin iv hoo were hurt.

"It matthers nowt," hoo said, lettin him help her up an' set her on a cheer. "He's gettin o'er his hig neaw, an' there'll be quietness for another neet. Come here, Alice, my love."

A little lass crept eaut ov a corner to her mother's knee. Ellen clipped her up an' kissed her. "Has he hurt thee, my beauty?"

"Nowe, aw were nobbut freeten't, mother."

"Run away to bed, my love, an' tak t' little uns wi thee."

Alice ferreted eaut two lads fro their nooks an' took 'em upstairs. O this time Ben had stood still, lookin as black as thunner, heedless o' th' creawd o' folk buzzin reaund his dur; but neaw, weary o' doin nowt, he started swearin at th' parson, an' ordherin him off.

"Tha's middlin ov impidence to come bangin into a chap's heause this road, but aw reckon tha'll tak care to pay noane o' th' rent. Eautside wi thee."

"Is it safe to leave you alone with him?" th' parson axed Ellen.

"Ah! he'll be quiet enough neaw. Aw'm mich obleeged to yo for yor throuble, but aw'm rayther soory yo coome in. It nobbut makes him stupid to be crossed."

"I suppose the correct thing would have been to stand outside, as the neighbours were doing, listen to your shrieks calmly, allow you to be quietly murdered, and then have walked off unconcernedly!"

"It's a pity yo coom in, shuzheaw."

"You shall live to change your opinion," th' parson said. "It is well I came, and you may depend upon it I shall come again."

"Tha'd best wait to be invited first," Ben grunted. "Tha'rt middlin free an' yezzy, but aw'm t' maisther here mostly. Be off!"

"As for you, miserable ruffian!" th' parson said, turnin on him, "your power to afflict these helpless creatures shall be lessened. Lay a finger upon one of them, and I swear that if there is justice in this island it shall be invoked to punish you!"

"Aw've bin seechin justice a good while," Ben said, wi a dhrunken laugh. "Bring it an' welcome!"

"I will call again to-morrow," th' parson said to Ellen; an' he went eaut, t' wondherin creawd followin at his heels sperrin heaw he'd gwone on wi savage Ben.

He co'd again t' next afthernoon—Sunday—but fund Ben hadn't getten up. Ellen were noane mich plez't to see him, as hoo'd a fine pair o' black e'en hoo'd rayther ha kept eaut o' th' seet, an' were freeten't Ben 'd be awkart when he yerd o' th' parson co'in.

"It's no use yo comin again to-day," hoo said. "He'll get up toard baggin-time, an' he olez gwoes eaut for a tuthri pints at neet. Are yo one o' th' Owd Church felleys?"

"Yes, I have lately come there as curate."

"What done they co yo?"

"Francis Ashburn, or oftener Frank."

"Well, aw darsay yo're weel-myenin enough, but yo'd best let us a-be. Aw darn't encourage onybody to come here."

"You must be in mortal terror of this man," Ashburn said, laughin an' sittin him deawn. "Why don't you leave him?"

"Yer yo! He's gettin up!" Ellen co'd eaut, freeten't eaut ov her wits. "Do go, felley, for God's sake! Childher, put yor caps on an' run eautside a bit."

"What country have I dropped into?" th' parson axed. "Is this civilized England, or have I strayed into some barbarous clime? Don't be afraid, my good woman; this man must be faced and subdued, or you will have no comfort with him as long as you live."

He sit cool an' yezzy, swingin one leg o'er t'other, an' Ellen plucked up a bit to see him so bowd an' firm. In a bit a heavy foot coome deawn th' stairs, an' Ramsden showed hissel, unweshed, his thin grey yure flyin, nowt on but breeches an' shirt. Ashburn geet up an' put his hond eaut. "Good mornin," he said wi a smile, takkin stock o' Ben's lusty brode-set figure an' obstinate-lookin face.

"Mornin," Ben grunted, just touchin t'other's fingers. "What done yo want?"

"Nothing particular. I am paying you a friendly visit, that's all."

"Tha's paid it neaw, then, so be gooin. We're so little used to friendly visits 'at eaur manners happen wain't shuit thee."

"They don't suit me at all. Judging from what I have already seen it appears to me that a native African could give you a good start and easily come in first."

"We're noane cut eaut bi thy pattheran, tha sees," Ben said wi savage scorn. "Tha should ha sent us a tallygram, an' we met ha bin awther't ready."

"I intend to alter you myself. You look like a sensible man, though evidently an obstinate one, and it should be possible to convince you that, as a matter of common sense, your course of life is foolish, wicked, barbarous."

"Well, aw'll be damned iv ever aw yerd sich impidence as this i' mi life!" Ramsden brasted eaut, fottin th' table a wusk wi his big neighve. "Cawn't aw plez mysel what aw do, beaut havin a little grinnin dandy like thee on mi ribs?"

"If the evil were confined to yourself I should care less, though even then I should interfere; but when I find your wife and children shrinking from you, living in danger of their lives ——"

"What nonsense is this?" Ben broke in. "What lies hast bin tellin him Ellen? Have aw bin a good husban to thee or not?"

Ellen dursen't onswer that question, so hoo started cryin an' said nowt.

"What!" Ben sheauted. "Will yo ston up to me i' mi own heause thryin to make eaut aw'm sich a wasthrel as that, an' afther o aw've put up wi? Is it noane enough for yo rich idle folk to sweigh us deawn an' deny us ony mak o' common justice, beaut comin here wi th' dules's own impidence co'in me to mi face. Wilta goo, or be punced eaut?"

"I will go," th' parson said, gettin up quietly. "You are a nice man to talk of justice."

"Who should talk abeaut it iv aw munnot? Who's bin wur put on nor me?"

"Your wife for one, I should think. However, rich and idle as I am, I have my living to earn and a sermon to preach to-night, so I must go. You will see me again."

"Iv tha keeps comin botherin me aw'll breighk thi neck," Ben slutther't, boilin o'er wi passion. "We wanten noather thee nor nowt tha has."

"I shall come again, dead or alive," Ashburn says. "Will you shake hands?"

Ben turned his back. Th' parson smil't to hissel, shook honds wi Ellen, an' went beaut another word.

He co'd again t' neet afther, bein ov a perseverin turn. Th' family had just finished their baggins, t' mother were busy sidin her table, an' Ben sit i' greight state at th' fireside, a sultan among his slaves.

"Here again!" he grunted, lookin at th' parson as iv he could ha bitten him.

"As you see," Ashburn says, sittin deawn an' takkin t' youngest chilt on his knee. "What is your name my little fellow?"

T' little lad were too shy to speighk, so th' parson gav him a bunch o' keighs to play wi an' went on: "I am glad to see you so much better this evening. The fever has gone from your blood to a great extent, and you look like a reasonable and reasoning human creature, instead of the brutal and brainless animal you seemed to be on Saturday. Let me compliment you on the improvement."

Ellen fair dithered in her clogs to yer this cool young chap co'in her husband that road; two words o' that sort were enough to madden him i' general, an here he sit hearkenin quietly to a whol hondful o' sthraight forrad talk, an' lookin a bit shame-faced beside.

"Tha'rt a plain-spokken chap," he said, "an' noane short o' gam to come swaggerin here this road ——"

"To beard the lion in his den,
The Ramsden in his hall,"

th' parson put in.

"What makes thee tak o this throuble? Aw tell thee, plain enough, tha'rt noane wanted."

"I have always been of a meddlesome, inquisitive disposition. Besides, if you consider for a moment you will perceive that this occupation is part of my duty."

"Arta for botherin o t' fellahs i' th' parish at this rate?"

"By no means. Most of them can do as well without as with me, others want occasional care and assistance, a few require frequent looking up, and you alone, so far as I know, demand continual watching."

It were touch an' goo wi th' parson then, an' he knew it, though he kept playin wi th' chilt an' showed no signs o' what he thought. Ben flushed wi sudden passion, jumped eaut ov his cheer, an' laid howd ov Ashburn's shooldher; but th' parson looked quietly up at him beaut stirrin, so he cool't an' sit him deawn again.

"Tha'rt a cool hond!" he said, showin his teeth in a bad temper't grin. "So tha thinks me a gradely ill un, doesta?"

"I do indeed."

"That's o tha knows abeaut it! Arta foo enough to think tha con read a chap's charicther bi seein him once? Afore tha could do me justice tha'd ha to larn summat abeaut what aw've had to go through."

"You talk a good deal about justice, I have noticed. Where is the equity of punishing your wife and children because you have had to suffer?"

"Aw don't punish 'em," Ben grunted, fillin a short clay an' startin to smooke. "Naught o' th' sort! Sich like as thee knows nowt what a hard-wortchin chap has to put up wi."

"Being idle myself; eh?"

"To be sure."

"And so enormously wealthy?"

"Well, aw reckon tha'rt weel off; most o' yo humbugs are. Heaw is it tha's thried to beg nowt yet? Is there no stained windows wanted, nor brass for t' niggers, nor nowt?"

"There is much wanted, my friend; but we can discuss those matters when you have become a peaceable self-denying citizen, and a regular attender at public worship."

Ben laughed wi scorn. "Tha'll have a bit to wait afore that happens. Parsons mun larn to talk sense afore aw sit hearkenin 'em, an' give o'er beggin so mich afore aw go near 'em."

"You will not object to send your children to a Sunday school, perhaps!"

"Oh nowe! They may goo iv they wanten."

"They'n hardly a rag to their backs," Ellen said. "Iv tha'll get 'em some clooas they con goo."

"Clooas!" Ben snarl't. "O maks ov expense! Aw wain't ha t' childher stuck up wi a lot o' faldherdals; we cawn't afford it. They mun stop as they are."

"Will you allow me to pay for them?" Ashburn axed, puttin a sovereign on th' table. "I shall take it as a great favour if you will."

Ben looked wi greedy e'en at th' gowd piece. "Lev it iv tha's a mind," he says; "but iv tha does aw s' spend it i' ale."

"I don't think you will," Ashburn said, gettin up to goo. "A man with your sense of justice. However, we shall see."

III.

Ben were as good as his word. He went on t' fuddle wi th' parson's sovereign, makin hissel ill an' loisin nearly a week's wark, so t' childher were fur off their new clooas nor ever. Ellen cried, sayin hoo could ne'er forshame to face th' curate again, but Ben nobbut swore at her, reckonin he hoped it'd teighch one meddlin foo to mind his own business. It were tuthri days afore Ashburn co'd again, as some job or another had takken him eaut o' th' teawn. When he did co it didn't tak him long to find what had happen't, for Ben towd him sthraight off.

"All right!" Asburn said as iv nowt were. "So your children are no nearer school, Mrs. Ramsden?"

Ellen said nowe, they werenot; an' were makin some shame-faced excuses, but Ben stopped her middlin sharp.

Ashburn went on: "I think if I had children of my own, and

were an able-bodied man, skilled in labour, I would struggle hard to keep those children decently dressed. If I were so pitiably helpless that I could not refrain from spending the necessary money in beer, I could certainly not object to my children rising up and asking for justice."

It suited noane o' Ben to have his favouryte word cobbed into his teeth that road, but he threw it off wi a blustherin laugh, put his cap on, an' said,

"Well, aw'll goo as fur as th' aleheause. Will yo come, parson?"

"Certainly, if you wish me to do so."

Ben an' Ellen stared at him wi oppen meauths.

"Yo will!" Ben axed, wondherin. "Well, aw'll be hanged!"

"What surprises you? Haven't I as much right to go to an alehouse as you have? As a matter of justice I have more right; for I can afford to go and you can't."

"Come on!" Ben said, wi a seaur grin. "It'll be summat fresh to get on th' fuddle wi a parson."

"One moment; let us have these children attended to. You are not worthy to be trusted with money, so I will write down my tailor's address, and your wife shall go and get what clothes she needs. Observe, it is a piece of great injustice that I should be put to this expense; you are well able to buy the things wanted if you would."

It were mony a year sin' Ben had felt so potther't. He reckon't to get mad to hud his feelins, co'in eaut in a crammed style, "Are yo for comin or not? Aw cawn't stop here o neet."

They set eaut together for Ben's favouryte heause, went into th' tapreawm an' co'd for some ale. There were nobbut one chap in beside—a dirty fley crow sittin behinnd a pint pot.

"Neaw, Ginger!" Ben said to him. "Have another pint."

"O reet," Ginger says. "It'll help to balance."

"Heaw balance? What dost myen?"

"Nowt, nobbut aw've had some croot ale this afthernoon."

"Crooked ale!" Ashburn co'd eaut. "What can you mean by that?"

"It's simple enough," Ginger towd him. "First aw geet a gill, an' then a pint, an' a quart on t' top o' that, so they'n worted a bit. Iv aw'd laid th' quart in for a feaundation it'd ha bin moore sensible like;" so Ginger laid his yead on th' table an' fell asleep.

Ashburn paid for two pints, an' supped o' one on 'em.

"Poor stuff!" he said, screwin his meauth up. "How many pints of this trash can you drink at a sitting?"

"It depends; happen seven or eight i' general."

"Well, every man to his taste," Ashburn said, pooin eaut a pipe an peauch. "As we are in such a dissipating humour I may as well have a smoke."

Ramsden watched him wi a curlin lip. "Ah! yo con grumble at us poor divvles for smookin or dhrinkin, but yo're no betther nor us when yo're reckon't up."

"When have I grumbled at you, my friend?"

"Iv yo hannot other folk han."

"A very just reflection, truly. By the way, I notice that you are quite a different man here. How is it? You are better tempered than when at home; you seem freer and more content."

"Aw'm olez comfortable here, some road."

"Strange phenomenon! These benches are hard, the bare walls far from inviting, the society—if this gentleman is a sample of it—is indifferent, the ale sour. Where is the charm?"

"Cawn't say. Have another pint."

"By no means. I have too much respect for my stomach to pour this stuff into it."

So Ramsden had one hissel, an' very soon another. As he supped his tongue begun to swing, an' afore bedtime Ashburn had larn't summat abeaut him, an' could partly undherston heaw th' poor fellah had groon into what he were. Toard ten o' t' clock th' weighver began to get noisy an' awkart, so Ashburn shapped for off. He'd had just abeaut enough o' that cheerless shop, an' bin betther stared at bi lonlord an' customers nor ever he had bin in his life afore.

"Come along, Ben!" he said. "We have been here long enough."

"Mind yor own business," Ramsden greawl't, wi a curse. "What done yo keep meddlin wi me for? Aw'm beaun to have another pint."

"Get a quart if you have any."

"What the hangment for?"

"A pint will make you quarrelsome, and lead to trouble; a quart may stupefy you sufficiently to ensure your going quietly to bed."

"Tha'rt a quare un, bi gum! Aw ne'er yerd ov a parson persuadin folk to get fuddl't afore."

"Perhaps not. I must thank you for the evening's entertainment, but can't say that I should care to come here often. It is singular that you don't get tired of this dreary business. Good night."

"Good neet," Ramsden grunted, an' began singin "Oh! the Loom an' the Lathe," to a dismal tune.

On t' Sunday afther that o t' childher were turn't eaut i' new shuits an' went to schoo twice, plezin their mother aboon a bit; an' th' week followin their fayther went on th' spree, as his habit were neaw an' again. Ellen knew what to expect—two or three week sleauchin beaut wark, no brass comin in, o on 'em brought to th' edge o' clemmin, an' very likely cleauted an' punced weel.

In her temper hoo blamed th' parson for it, tellin him, "Iv it hadn't bin for yor botherin him so mich he'd ha bin reet enough. Yo'n fair dhriven him to it this time!"

That cut Ashburn to th' very heart. He turn't away wi a white face an' walked eaut o' th' heause beaut a word, wondherin iv there were ony gratitude i' th' world; but he were soon hissel again, an' next time he co'd Ellen went deawn on her knees, sobbin, beggin his pardon, roosin his kindness, an' even kissin his cwot-lap. One day, when he'd had nearly a fortnit on th' spree, an' t' brass were done, Ben went wom wi a brilliant idea in his yead, walked sthraight upstairs, took t' childhers' new Sunday clooas fro t' dhrawer, lapped 'em i' papper an' marched deawn wi 'em undher his arm.

"Whatever is t' chap afther?" Ellen wondher't, watchin him as he went through th' kitchen on his road eaut, givin her noather word nor look. It sthruck her o in a minute as hoo seed t' bundle undher his arm. Hoo ran an' catched howd on him, as he laid his hond on th' dur.

"Ben! Tha'rt never takkin t' childhers' clooas! Tha shannot! Tha shannot!" Hoo poo'd an' rove at th' parcel, but it were fast in his sthrong arm. He said nowt, but sent her flyin mony a yard off an' set th' dur oppen.

"Tha shannot goo!" Ellen skriked, runnin at him again an' gettin fast howd ov his arm. "Aw'll be poo'd i' lumps afore aw'll let thee."

"Ger off!" grunted Ben wi a dhrunken wag ov his muddl't yead. "Aw'll hit thee!"

"Ben!" Ellen sobbed, dhroppin on her knees afore him, "it's seldom aw've axed thee for owt sin' we geet wed—tha met plez me this once. Dunnot tak t' poor childhers' things, 'at they're so preaud on an' looken so weel in! Dunnot play sich a dirty thrick on th' good chap 'at bought 'em! Tak owt there is i' th' heause beside an' aw'll ne'er say a word. Give it me, Ben! Give it me!"

"Let loase!" Ben greawl't shuttin his big neighve. "Aw tell thee once; aw tell thee twice—tha'll happen be quiet neaw!"

He hit her fair between th' e'en, rowlin her o'er helpless an' bleedin. Off he went to a pop-shop, geet some brass lent on his bundle, an' were makin for th' aleheause again when he coome across th' parson.

"Hello theere!" Ben co'd eaut to him, stonnin as steady as he could. "Come an' have a pint."

"No, thank you. The beer is not good enough."

"Aw've just bin poppin yon clooas yo bought for th' young uns, so aw con afford to pay for a saup iv yo'll have it."

Ashburn's cheek flushed red an' he partly turned away, Ben watchin him wi a dhrunken grin.

"You may as well give me the pawn-ticket," th' curate said,

smotherin his temper. "You will never be able to redeem the clothes yourself, of course?"

"There's no tellin; never's a long word. What done yo want th' ticket for?"

"To get the clothes out again."

"Aw'll sell yo th' ticket for a shillin," Ben says, pooin t' bit o' papper eaut ov his pocket. "Come! that's chep enough, surelee, seein what a grand oppenin yo'll have for playin th' guardian angel. But yo mun undherston 'at aw s' pop t' things again iv aw set that road."

"Probably you will, being so just and honest a man," Ashburn said, payin for th' ticket an' levin th' fawse fuddler to hissel.

So th' clooas were takken eaut o' pop again an' put into Ellen's honds, an' th' same gam were played twice moore. Then th' parson stopped it. "I hoped to touch his sense of shame, Mrs. Ramsden," he said, "but that seems impossible. I am simply supplying him with funds for drink, and making matters worse. The clothes shall stop where they are."

Then he started sperrin heaw they were for meight, fund they were o but clemmed, an' set 'em gooin again wi a full panthry. Ellen were gettin to think him moore angel nor mon, he'd so oft leeten't her throubles an' helped her forrad; an' it were a greight satisfaction to him 'at he'd shapped to make things a bit moore comfortable for her an' th' young uns, though he'd failed to do ony good wi stupid Ben.

Just abeaut th' finish up o' Ben's spreein, when he'd getten hissel supped into a fayver an' started thinkin he met as weel get back to his wark on t' comin Monday, his son Harry took it into his yead to co a seein his faythe an' mother. Harry's weddin had turn't eaut weel. He'd getten a good wife, an' were a steady promisin young chap hissel, so he'd had nowt to repent on i' takkin his own road.

"It's a good while sin' aw seed eaur folk," he towd his wife one Sethurday neet; "aw'll slip o'er an' see heaw they're gettin on. Mi faythe 'll be at th' aleheause, aw reckon; but aw s' find mi mother awom shuzheaw."

So he went; takkin his little five year owd lass, Polly, wi him. Ben were awom as it happen't, sittin hearkenin a lecthur fro Ashburn, nobbut hawve sober, an' i' one ov his worst tempers. Th' parson's talk had nettl't him a bit, so when Harry showed hissel t' faythe jumped up, pointed to th' dur an' ordher't him off.

"Don't be so crammed, mon," Harry said, comin forrad. "We'n ne'er met for hawve-a-dozen year, so it's no use fo'in eaut neaw. Polly, run an' kiss thi gronfaythe."

T' little lass went, raythe slow, for there were nowt invitin abeaut Ben's looks; stoppin within arm's length on him, fyerd o' gooin nearer. Then, ov a sudden, o th' dangerous, devilish

temper Ben had nursed so long gethered an' broke eaut. He fell into a wild fit o' cursin, laid howd o' t' little lass, an' threw her across th' kitchen. Hoo gav one screm, dhropped huddl't up in a lump, an' lee still. Harry jumped forrad wi a sheaut, but geet a knock fro his fayther's hond 'at sthretched him dateless on th' flags.

"Heaw mony moore?" Ben yelled, sthridin reaund ravin mad. "Am aw maisther here or not?"

"You dastardly hound!" th' parson sheauted, loisin o his grip ov hissel for once. "Stand and fight if you have the spirit of a man."

"Feight!" Ben roared, gooin at th' parson yead first. "Aw'll punce thi ribs in i' hawve a minute!"

Ellen were bendin o'er little Polly, thryin to bring her reaund. Hoo looked up skrikin when th' feight started, thinkin t' parson had no chance again Ben's weight an' muscle; but hoo soon seed different. Ashburn could box, an' keepin eaut o' Ben's clutches, an' dodgin his clogs, he gav him sich a hidin i' less nor ten minutes as bunged his e'en up, set his nose bleedin, an' sattl't him off quiet an' satisfied.

"Lie down, dog!" th' parson said, knockin th' weighver into a corner wi a last cleaut. Then he turn't to Harry, loasen't his collar, an' sthraighten't him eaut to get his wynt back yezzier.

"How is the child, Mrs. Ramsden?"

"Aw deaubt it's badly hurt somewheere. It keeps mournin an' twitchin, an' it doesn't know me."

"Any bones broken? Is there a doctor near? If so, fetch him."

"There's one i' t' next sthreet," Ellen said, puttin her shawl on. "Aw'll fot him in a minute. Well! there's a bonny look-on here for a dacent heause!"

"Never mind that; run for the doctor," th' parson says. Whol hoo were away he geet a saup o' wayther for Harry, an' brought him reaund. He ne'er went near Ben, knowin there were no greight damage done i' that quather, an' feelin moore inclined to jump on him nor help him.

T' docthor coome, looked reaund an' whistl't. "You've had a tidy row here, Frank. Where shall I begin?"

"Look at this child first. I'm afraid she is injured somewhere."

T' docthor examined her wi care, an' said, "The brain has had a severe shock, which may permanently affect it, or may not—we must wait to know. The right leg is broken and twisted at the knee joint. In all probability the child will be a cripple for life."

"Cripple!" Harry co'd eaut, dhraggin hissel forrad across th' floor. "Oh nowe! dunnot say that! Dunnot, docthor! Dunnot!"

"Who's crippl't!" grunted Ben, just wakkenin up in his corner. "What's o this bother abeaut?"

Ashburn sthrode to him, sent th' table spinnin eaut o' th' road, an' poo'd him in a lump to wheere Polly were lying on Ellen's knee.

"Look upon your work," he said. "Look at this child, crushed, all but killed, by your hand, and hide your face in shame."

"Don't hecthor o'er me," Ben said, gettin up an' wipin his bleedin face. He turned to Harry. "Tak thi chilt wom; tha'd no business to bring her."

That were raythor moore nor Harry could ston. He jumped for th' poker, an' it took bwoth t' docthor an' parson a couple o' minutes' hard sthrugglin to stop him fro breighkin his fayther's yead wi it.

"That'll do!" Harry said, when they'd quieten't him. "Aw were a foo, an' met ha done murdher." He took Polly in his arms an' turn't to th' dur. "Iv there's justice i' heaven, fayther, an' a watchin God to keep us reet, yo'll yer moore abeaut this job some day. There's no police courts nor law 'at con help me here; aw mun lev it for different honds to sattle. Aw've finished wi yo neaw; yo're no fayther o' mine. Yo may clem afore aw'll heighve a finger to help yo; an' aw hope yo'll live i' misery an' dee i' torment, sufferin as mich as yo'n made me suffer."

"Justice?" mutther't Ben, as iv he were dhremin, watchin Harry walk eaut wi th' little lass in his arms. "What's that he says?"

"You must leave this man," Ashburn said to Ellen. "Your life is in danger with him. I give him up, now; all I can do only makes him worse."

"Lev him!" Ellen said. "Nay! surelee not, afther o these years! Ben! tha'll ne'er hurt me, aw know; they munnot persuade me to lev thee."

"Plez thysel," Ben mutther't, very surly, his mind runnin on summat else. "Aw'm independent ov o t' bag o' thricks, iv it comes to that. Justice, did he say?" He turned on th' docthor an' Ashburn, wi th' owd stupid look on his face. "Eaut o' th' heause wi yo! Aw'm maisther here!"

IV.

When Ben Ramsden coome to his reet senses again afther lamin his gronchilt, when tuthri days' wark had cooled his wot blood an' gien him time to think, he felt lower sunk in his own opinion nor ever he had done afore, an' began wondherin iv his style o' livin were woth o t' bother it cost him an' other folk. His stupid pride kept him fro gooin to see his son an' makin what poor amends he met ha done, but he couldn't get eaut ov his yead th' pitiful seet o' little Polly, nor help blamin hissel for what he'd done.

"Aw mun be gettin wur," he thought. "Th' parson's gien me up neaw, an' that shows."

He felt so repentant that neet 'at he went off an' supped some unyerd on stock o' cowd pints, rowlin wom to bed lost to seet an' seaund; for his preaud stomach stopped him fro showin ony signs o' mendin, an' so there were nobbut t'other road left oppen.

T' neet afther he were sittin awom feelin sick an' ill, i' no humour for ale for a wondher, when Ashburn walked in.

Ben were rare an' plez't to see him, for th' parson were th' only friend he had woth aught, so he thried to look as sulky as he could (an' he'd greight peawers i' that line) an' co'd eaut in a surly voice,

"Hello! Aw thought yo'd done wi us?"

"Why did you think so?"

"Yo said so, shuzheaw."

"Sometimes people say and do things in the heat of anger which they afterwards repent of. Does that ever happen with you?"

Ben swore, an' towd him to mind his own business.

"Very good!" says Ashburn. "You feel remorse, I can see, and so the matter may rest between us. I want to mention another thing. Are you aware that one of your sons has decided talent for drawing?"

"Nowe! Aw ne'er knew they'd talent for nowt."

"Look at these sketches then," pooin some bits o' dirty papper eaut ov his pocket." "These are samples of your Joe's work."

"Nay sure!" Ben said, fair capped for once. "Why, this is packin papper eaut o' cop skips. An has eaur Joe dhrawn o these —heauses, an' folk, an' broos, an' meadows! Aw cawn't believe it."

"The lad has always hidden his accomplishment from you, knowing he would get no encouragement. Joe thinks it a piece of great injustice that he has not been provided with a better father ——"

"Theere yo gwone again wi yor justice!"

"Have I pierced your thick skin at last? Come now! Is a lad who can produce work like this to be wasted in a factory?"

"He mun wortch hissel eaut, iv he's cliver enough."

"You must help him by getting him properly taught."

"Aw cawn't afford it; an' we cawn't do beaut his wage, noather. Aw'd olez a fancy for my childher risin i' th' world, but luck's bin again 'em."

"You have always had vague desires, but have not seriously faced the question of ways and means. Without definite ideas little can be done. Now here is something definite enough. With a little self-denial you can pay for Joe's teaching, and in a few years he will do you credit."

"It cawn't be done. He mun stop where he is."

"Consider this for a minute. Undertake the duty of helping

the lad forward, and your own character is bound to improve in the process. You will have before you a worthy object, your energies will be strung, the habit of self-denial will benefit you greatly, you will rise to a higher plane in life. What lies before you in your present course? So many barrels of beer to be drunk; so many squabbles, fights, black eyes; so many days of muddled oblivion, followed by as many more of sulky repentance; a long vista of misspent lonely years, ending in a workhouse and a pauper's grave. The choice should be easy."

"Aw wish yo'd mind yor own business! Joe mun stop where he is."

"I suppose so. But you can't deny that with very moderate carefulness in the past you would have been well able to help the lad now. Consequently it appears that with all your loud-mouthed demands for justice to yourself and your children, you are no more virtuous at the bottom than other people are."

"Heaw weel he reckons me up!" Ben thought to hissel, sayin nowt.

"However, the lad's ability shall be cultivated," Frank went on. "I will see to his getting the necessary tuition in spite of you. How long will you, who profess to be an independent man, condescend to receive my charity?"

"He hits hard," Ben mutther't when th' parson had gwone. "But he's reet, dam him!"

Then he smooked four pipes o' thick twist sthraight off, makin hissel so dhry 'at he'd to bowt off on th' fuddle again.

Years went on, showin little awtheration i' Ben's style o' livin. His childher grew up an' left wom one afther another, ne'er botherin him no fur. They o turned eaut steady, dacent lads an' lasses, weel able to tak care o' theirsel; an' young Joe, th' artist, helped forrad by Ashburn, made bwoth fame an' brass; but ne'er one o' th' crew looked toard wom again afther once levin it. Happen they were o touched wi their fayther's stupid, independent spirit. At ony rate he'd done his best to squeeze eaut on 'em what bit o' tendherness they met ha felt for him; an' he'd shapped it, too, some weel.

But little as he showed it, an' long as th' change took to wortch itsel eaut, Ben were turnin into a different mon. He'd olez reckon't to laugh an' sneer at religious folk as a lot ov humbugs, but there were no gettin o'er a sample like Ashburn. Mony an' mony a time Ben had thought to hissel, "What makes this parson spend so mich time an' brass on us? He makes nowt by it. There mun be summat in this religion iv a sensible chap like him believes in it." He'd feel asham't ov hissel afther one o' these thoughtful fits, an' be forced to goo on th' spree to get o'er it. Ashburn kept up his friendly visits, takkin care Ellen wanted for nowt, but couldn't help thinkin Ben geet wur astid o' betther. Heawever,

th' curate were mista'en abeaut that; every kindness shown him made th' poor thick-yeaded weighver moore an' moore grateful, though he were very careful to keep that to hissel, showin his sulkiest side when his heart were softest; an' a time were comin when his betther feelins, grooin sthronger bi keepin deawn, were to maisther him, an' turn him into far different roads nor his clogs had bin used to thravellin.

Frank Ashburn had never bin a very lusty chap. He'd middlin o' muscle, an' moore spirit; but th' heart were a wake spot, an' his wark were noane likely to spare it mich. He'd no notion o' takkin care ov hissel i' ony shap; so he wortched away soon an' late as long as he could, an' then dhropped. He fund hissel one Sethurday neet fair at th' far end; wake as a kittlin, an' wi a curious jumpin i' th' lift breast, as iv his heart were countin six, stoppin a bit, countin again, an' so on.

"One more day's work," he thought. It may kill me, but I shall never be worth anything again and may as well risk it. One more sermon, and there's an end of poor Frank. I wish that confounded Ramsden had shown some improvement after all my years of trouble with him; but he is surlier than ever of late, although I have sometimes fancied he is gentler with his wife. Poor fellow, with his parrot cry of 'Justice!' I have a good mind to preach upon his favourite theme to-morrow night."

Ben geet up toard dinnertime that Sunday feelin raythor deawn. He'd a bad yeadwartch wi suppin too mich t' neet afore, an' he felt raythor lost becose th' parson hadn't co'd to see him for a week. He'd getten so used to Frank blowin him up reglar, 'at he quite missed th' excitement on it. He potther't abeaut whol baggin-time, wi no satisfaction to hissel nor nobry else.

"Has t' parson gien us up again?" he axed his wife.

"They say'n he's very ill," Ellen towd him. "Eh, Ben! what if he were to dee?"

"Well, what then?"

"Never nobry had a betther friend nor we'n had i' him," Ellen said, wi her brat to her e'en. "Whatever could we do beaut him!"

"Same as we did afore he coome; what else? Dost think o t' world 'll stop for want o' one parson?"

But for o his talk Ben were freeten't. He went eaut, levin Ellen noane so mich comforted, an' her question kept runnin through his yead, "What iv he were to dee? What iv he were to dee?"

"Aw'll awther mi ceaunts," he mutther't to hissel. "Aw will, for sure! Aw'm weary o' this mak."

He geet wandher't up toard th' Owd Church, yerd th' bells ringin, seed a sthrem o' folk gooin to th' sarvice, an' felt hawve a

Baggin-time, tea-time.

mind to goo hissel; but next minute laughed i' scorn, turnin toard th' "Royal Oak," across Church Lone. As he turned he coome face to face wi Ashburn; white and thin, noane fit to be eaut that were plain.

"Are you coming into the church?" th' curate axed.

"Me in a church?" Ramsden sneer't. "That's noane likely."

"Will you come, Ben? I ask you as a friend to oblige me. It is the first and last favour I shall ever ask from you."

"It's o nonsense!" Ramsden blusther't, ready to brast eaut cryin, but brazenin it eaut to th' end. "Aw'll ha' nowt to do wi sich humbuggin wark. Tha'rt lookin ill, lad. Tha'd have a job to wallop me neaw, aw think."

"Yes; I am effectually 'walloped' myself. The last bell has stopped. Are you coming?"

"Nay! Aw'll goo an' have a gill; it'll do me moore good."

"As you will," Ashburn said wi a sigh. "Shake hands; I may never see you again."

"Aw'll co an' see yo to-morn at neet. Yo'n bin oft enough to my heause; aw'll come to yors for a change."

"To-morrow night?" Ashburn said, wi a sthrange smile. "Yes, come by all means. You may be in time."

He hurried into th' church, Ben stonnin watchin him, wondherin what th' chap myent bi bein i' time. Then he went into th' aleheause, geet a pint ov his favouryte physic, set t' pot to his meauth, an' stopped.

"Aw'm a smart chap!" he said to hissel. "Th' best friend ever aw fund i' this world's axed me for th' first time in his life to do summat for him, an' aw wouldn't." He set his pot deawn beaut suppin. "Have aw lost o th' reet feelins ov a mon? Is this thee, Ben; an' iv so what devil's getten into thee sin' tha were a young chap? Aw studied hard whol a lad, an' larn't a dyel o' things. Where's mi larnin neaw? O gwone! Aw myent doin summat to help mi wife an' childher. What have aw done? Th' wife's a dhrudgin miserable ill-used woman; t' childher liken me as weel as they done Owd Nick. It's ale! It *con* be nowt else! Every hope an' comfort i' life cobbed away for th' sake o' suppin tuthri potful o' seaur maut juice every week! Brass spent, time wasted, wholsome blood turn't to poison! It's desperate expensive dhrink at threepence a quart. Ben, tha'rt a foo! Thy balance sheet adds up some ill. It's sideheavy—an' th' wrong side too!" He shook his neighve at th' pint pot. "It's th' ale! Aw s' be fit for nowt whol aw dhrink, an' iv aw'm to give o'er it mun be neaw, for yon chap's beaun to dee an' lev me to feight on bi mysel. What am aw beaun to do?" He were a good while makin his mind up. At last he geet off th' bench. "This is mi last pint; aw'll ne'er sup ale again." He emptied th' pot an' poo'd

his face. "It's flat!" he grumbl't, forgettin heaw long he'd letten it ston. "They met ha gien me some dacent stuff for a finish."

He walked across to th' church, crept softly in, an' sit deawn near th' dur. Everything were very still, he thought, an' wondher't what made folk so quiet. Then he yerd a voice speighkin a good way off, low but clear, an' lookin up he seed Ashburn stonnin i th' pulpit. Some sweet that voice seaunded in his ears—some oft he'd yerd it, scornin what it towd him—some fain he'd a sworn to heed it neaw, iv it could nobbut stop wi him—ah! iv it could nobbut stop! "What iv he were to dee? What iv he were to dee?"

Ashburn were talkin abeaut justice, Ben's favouryte subject. He showed what mak ov a world this 'd be iv nowt but just folk lived in it, an' leet his hearkeners see middlin plain heaw that could never happen, an' what for. There'd olez bin a dyel ov injustice i' th' world, he said, an' olez mut be whol th' present breed o' folk lived in it; an', sthrange to tell, folk 'at sheauted hardest for justice were lest inclin't to practise it theirsel. He filled up his sarmon wi anecdotes an' simils, keepin everybody intherested in his talk, same as he olez did, an' coome to th' finishin up. "My remarks to-night have been prompted by a case connected with my parish work among you. One man of my acquaintance in this town has been completely unmoved by persevering and deeply-considered efforts to improve his character. He has long been a drunkard, a wife beater, a careless father. Yet this man continually cries aloud for justice, with an earnestness that would be supremely absurd if it were not appalling. I have done my duty here with toil and carefulness, and on the whole am satisfied with the somewhat small result; yet I would give up all to see this one man—for whom I have chiefly and peculiarly striven—turned from his present courses into a nobler way. If by any miracle that could happen I should indeed think my labour here not wholly in vain."

He finished, an' they o stood up to sing that grand owd hymn, "For ever with the Lord." Ben had ne'er yerd that fine thrillin tune sin he were a little lad at th' Sunday schoo forty year back, but once yerd it con ne'er be forgetten. He went eaut wi th' inspired music ringin through his yead, walkin deawn th' church steps like a mon asleep, stopped in a quiet nook behinnd th' Packer, an' theere his deep-stirred feelins gushed fro his e'en, an' his sthrong body shook wi rivin sobs.

"It's little t' parson axes for o his labbour an' love," Ben thought, as he went forrad again wi soften't heart. "Cawn't aw manage this bit ov a job for him? It'll be a lastin shame to me an mine iv aw let him dee beaut givin him that satisfaction."

O that neet, whol he fell asleep i' bed, part o' th' owd hymn buzzed in his ears:

"For ever with the Lord!"
Father, if 'tis Thy will,
The promise of that faithful word
Even here to me fulfil.

Be Thou at my right hand,
Then can I never fail,
Uphold Thou me and I shall stand,
Fight, and I must prevail.

V.

As soon as Ben had finished his baggin next neet he made sthraight for Ashburn's lodgins an' axed for him. They weren't for lettin him in at first, but soon fund they'd have a job to keep t' chap eaut.

"Aw have to see him," Ben said. "We'n made it up. It's no use yo talkin."

He made his road up-stairs an' fund th' parson i' bed, lookin done, but wick enough yet to smile when he seed th' owd stupid yead he'd hommer't at so long.

"You are welcome," he says, puttin eaut his wasted hond. "Most obstinate and refractory of all my parishioners, I am glad to see you."

"Aw didn't think yo'd ha started blowin me up to-neet; but goo on, iv it's ony pleasur to yo. Aw con ston it."

"No. Surely I have 'blown up,' as you call it, enough. You must go your way in future unchecked and unchided by me. What hours of time I have wasted on you, to be sure!"

"Are yo sure it's o wasted?" Ben axed, an' his voice thrembl't a bit do what he would.

"I fear so. Politeness should perhaps induce me to give you a more flattering answer; but you know my blunt style and can perhaps excuse it."

"Neaw or never!" Ben thought to hissel. "Aw'll give him one bit o pleasur afore aw loise him." He kneel't deawn at th' bedside an' said, "Hearken to me, parson; aw've summat to say woth yerin. Aw hadn't thought to tell yo so soon, but aw'm bund to do it afore yo dee. Yo'n made a different chap on me otogether."

"Have I?" Ashburn axed, wi his faint smile. "Are you better or worse?"

"Yo mun sattle that for yorsel. Aw yerd th' finish o' yor sarmon last neet."

Th' curate stared at him i' wondher. "Did you so? After swearing so decidedly not to enter the church? What has come over you, my friend?"

Yerin, hearing. *Bund*, bound.

"It's *yo* at's getten o'er me," Ramsden went on. "There's summat in this religion afther o—there mun be! What's kept yo sthrivin an' feightin so long to help us? Yo'n made nought by it, an' nobbut worn yorsel eaut among it; but yo'd ne'er give in. What's made yo do it?"

"Christian love and a sense of duty are answerable for all. Maudlin cant, isn't it? Give me a drink of that stimulant, if you please; I am sinking fast."

"Cant, done yo co it?" Ben said, puttin his arm gently reaund th' curate's neck an' howdin t' physic to his meauth. "Then cant's saved mi wife an' childher fro clemmin, an' shown me what a foo an' a rogue aw've bin o these years. An' neaw yo're for deein, afore aw con show yo what a change yo'n made in me. That's justice!"

"You incorrigible creature!" th' parson co'd eaut, heighvin hissel o' one arm. "What right have *you* to prate of justice?"

"Yo'n axed me that afore, an' yo're reet too. But it's hard yo should have had o this bother an' cawn't live to see what good yo'n done."

"You will live at any rate. Time is all before you. Naturally you feel troubled and sorrowful to find me in this state, but how long will the feeling last after I am gone?"

"As long as aw live. Con aw ever be t' same chap again, done yo reckon? Heaw con onybody be done to as yo'n done to me beaut feelin heartbrokken at loisin sich a friend? Yo're little aware heaw aw've loved yo, for aw'd hardly own it to mysel; an' yo'n little thought mony a time when aw've bin sulky or awkart 'at every word yo said went through me like a dart, whol aw could fair ha cried an' axed yor pardon for plaguin yo so mich. Aw've larn't to feel like a brother toard yo."

"All the same, you would have wrung my neck cheerfully when we had our famous fight."

"Aw should! God help me, aw should!"

"No, no, my friend! this strange fit of penitence cannot last. It is like drawing water from rock to move your feelings at all in the direction of tenderness, and I take it as a high compliment that you should be so much affected by my death; but it can never last, you know."

"Cawn't it? Aw thought yo'd fund eaut aw could be middlin sthrong-willed, too, when aw set that road."

"Certainly; but this sudden change of long practised habits is hardly possible. If I *could* believe your repentance to be sincere and lasting what a happy man it would make me!"

"Sincere!" Ramsden said, jumpin up. "Done yo deaubt mi word? When did aw ever tell yo lies? As God yers an' sees us

Clemmin, starving.

aw'll live different fro this neet. Oh, Lord! help me neaw an' i' time to come! Aw've deaubted an' scorn't yor watchin peawer, but aw ston here neaw wake as a babby, axin for help. You *mun* help me, Lord, for mi best friend's deein undher mi e'en, never dhremin heaw it rives mi heart to see it, an' soon aw s' be left bi mysel. Let me live thuthri year longer, to do summat for o th' good chap's done for me!"

"Ben! can this wonderful thing be true?" th' parson said, pantin', takkin Ramsden's sthrong hond in his thin fingers. "Oh God! whose faithful servant I have long been, seeking no selfish reward, give me this one soul! Make this man strong in good as he has been stubborn in evil; humble his proud heart; open his blind eyes; strengthen his impulse towards right and truth! Justice he has long craved, not knowing his want of understanding; teach him now, and lead him, merciful Father, in Thy paths, that he may strive earnestly for the honour and glory of Thy name!"

"Amen!" Ramsden whisper't kneelin deawn an' coverin his face. "Teighch me! Show me! What con aw do? What con aw do?"

"Listen!" Ashburn said, his worn face shinin as iv a breet leet fell on it. "First of all, you must give up drinking."

"It's done."

"Your family is unhappy. See to it, as you would have peace here and hereafter. You demand justice; practise it in dealing with those dependent upon you. Remember this—he who deals justly never fails to receive justice. Prove to me one case in the world's history contradicting this law, and I will admit life to be a delusion, a mockery, and a lie."

"Be satisfied. Nobbut live another week an' yo'll see that awther't."

"I impose no religious forms upon you. Seek and practise such as you choose; but be sure that without prayer, felt or expressed, no man can fully live."

"Aw believe every word yo say'n. What else?"

"Nothing. The rest is for you to discover and decide upon. There are active and passive Christians—choose your own course. I will only suggest that a man with your strength of character might be an immense force for good among the working people here. As one of themselves you could do twice the work possible to a man like me."

"Aw'll do it, wi God's help."

Ashburn catched him bi th' arm wi a nervous grip. "Ben! is it true? Do you earnestly and seriously promise me all these things? How can I credit such a miracle?"

"What con aw say to make yo believe me?" Ben axed, showin his white face an' liftin his reet arm toard heaven. "Afore that God, so long denied, so late fund—afore yo, mi saviour, iv

ever a poor wasthrel had one i' this world—aw promise faithful an' thrue, yead an' heart, body an' bwons! Aw'll ne'er touch ale again; aw'll do reet awom; aw'll mind mi wark fro this day forrad; aw'll thry hard to help other folk; aw'll live justly accordin to mi leets, shuz who else does; aw'll feight hard for th' reet, an' iv aw breighk deawn aw'll start again, ne'er ownin mysel licked whol aw dee! Lord help me to keep this solemn promise!"

"A right confession of faith!" th' parson said, his een blazin'. "This makes amends for all!

'The fight is o'er, the battle won.'

Here is a Bible. Take it; read it; study the Sermon on the Mount, shape your future by it, and have no fear."

"Aw'll do it," Ben said, kissin th' book and puttin it in his pocket.

"You will find that old pawn ticket in the drawer yonder. It is no use now, but take it to remember me by. I suppose the poor children's clothes were never redeemed?"

"They're i' th' pop shop yet for what aw know," Ben said, pocketin th' ticket wi a shamefaced look. "An neaw that's enough abeaut me; what con aw do for *yo?*"

"Nothing, my dear friend; I am spent." He dhropped back faintin, o his fire gwone eaut on him. Ben ran to fot t' docthor, but Frank were past physic. Th' excitement had bin too mich for him, an' he stirred no moore. As th' poor weighver stood lookin deawn on th' friend 'at 'd done so mich for him he seed thoose breet e'en groo dim, felt th' wot hond turning cowd, an' knew that sthrong, tendher, lovin, patient heart were still. He kissed Ashburn's smooth foryead an' crept quietly away, wi sich torment in his mind as he'd ne'er known; sufferin agony 'at chawked an' crushed him, but carried life an' lastin comfort in it wings.

Ben went sthraight wom, walked quietly in, hanged his cap up, sit him deawn bi th' fire, an' started smookin, his wife starin at him wi o her e'en, for it were mony a long month sin' he'd reighched wom so soon an' sober. Heawever, hoo axed no questions, not knowin what mak ov a humour he were in, but geet on wi her heausewark, levin him to hissel.

"He's dyead, Ellen," Ben said in a bit.

"Who's dyead! Tha never myens t' parson?"

"Yigh; he's gwone."

Ellen sit deawn an' cried a good while, an' then shapped abeaut her wark again, sayin no moore. Ben had long dhrilled her into huddin her feelins, though for once he were nettl't becose hoo didn't make moore noise an' fuss.

In a bit hoo axed him, hawve freeten't, iv he weren't gooin to th' aleheause. He were just beaun to tell her he'd done wi that gam for ever, but another thought sthruck him.

"Aw'll just have hawve an heaur," he towd her, puttin his cap on an' walkin off. As he geet eautside he mutther't to hissel, "Aw'll go an' stop Ginger fro fuddlin; he's bin at it welly long enough. Aw con cure Ginger i' hawve an heaur, aw think."

Away he went to th' owd shop, where he fund Ginger asleep, as usal, wi his yead on th' tap-reawm table.

"Wakken up, lad!" Ben co'd eaut, clappin his back.

"Aw'll have a pint," says Ginger, rubbin his e'en an' gapin. "What art doing so lat, Ben?"

"Come eautside an' aw'll tell thee." When they geet into t' sthreet he went on, "Go thee wom an' to bed; it's hee time. Iv ever aw catch thee fuddl't again aw'll punce thee weel. Dost undherston that?"

"Well, tha knows, aw've getten to like ale. What's turn't thee so vartuous o at once?"

"Ne'er thee mind!" Ben said wi a catchin in his throat. "Aw'm beaun to be stiddy neaw, an' wortch; so tha'll ha to do th' same."

"Aw'm noan so fond o' wark."

"Nowe, aw know that; but tha'll start wortchin again or aw'll leather thee weel. So what saysta?"

"Oh! aw'll start, as tha'rt so particlar. Aw dun' know but aw'm weary o' this mak."

He promised to seech a shop next mornin, an' Ben slutther't back wom, sayin to hissel, "Aws' ha to get mi hond in at mendin folk neaw, so aw'll practise on Ginger."

Ashburn were buried at th' cemetary, an' Ben walked after his coffin o t' road, bare-yeaded; gettin off his wark o' purpose, an' gooin back to it when he'd done. There were tuthri score o' weet e'en bi that grave side, an' big yeps o' white fleawers were pil't up o reaund. Ben fancied he could like to lay tuthri blooms on th' grave hissel, but fund they cost a dyel. When his wark were o'er at neet he went into th' fields, teed up a honsome bunch o' wild fleawers an' thorn blossom, an' laid that o'er his buried friend. It looked raythar like a poor relation among th' fine camellias, but iv o his love an' sorrow could ha breeten't it no grandher fleawers need ha bin wanted.

When Sethurday coome Ben took o his wage wom, an' put it into Ellen's hond."

"Tak care o' this," he said in his rough way. "Aw've ne'er done no good wi brass; let's see heaw tha con shap."

"Ben!" hoo gasped, welly eaut ov her wits. "What does this myen?"

"Aw'll soon show thee what it myens," Ben said, pooin a square parcel eaut ov his pocket. "Look here."

Ellen oppen't th' parcel eaut. It were th' owd pop-ticket, framed an' glazed liked a picther. Hoo needed no more tellin,

but dhropped on his shouldher, sheddin tears ov a different sort fro what hoo'd bin used to for tuthri year.

"Tha sees neaw what it myens," Ben said. "We'll hang that up o'er th' cornish, to keep us i' mind o' one o' th' best fellahs 'at ever throde this greaund, an' we'll make some moore awtherations at th' same time. Tha's put up wi me some weel, never grumblin nor findin faut, but stickin to me like a faithful wife, though aw've mony a time thrated thee wur nor a dog. Aw've noane bin blint, lass, iv aw've said nowt. Thi love an' care are noane wasted—aw've nobbut bin savin 'em up, an' aw'll pay 'em back neaw wi compound intherist. So iv tha con let bygones a-be, an' start again beaut bearin me ony grudge, gi me a buss an' we'll sattle it.

"Bear thee a grudge!" Ellen said puttin her lips to his. "Nay! tha's olez bin t' same to me as when we started cwortin. Other folk may co thee iv they'n a mind, but it's noane my job."

VI.

Iv onybody thinks Ben had a yezzy piece o' business afore him afther he turned sober, that thought's noane reet. He managed to maisther hissel, wi hard wark, an' very near made Ginger into a respectable mon, hardher wark again; but he fund th' hardest business ov o were to persuade folk i' general 'at he'd mended his ways. He'd bin dhrunken an' nowt long enough to get a charicther likely to last him a bit. Harry gav him th' keenest rub ov onybody. Ben co'd a-seein him two year afther Ashburn were buried, thinkin their differences met be pieced up, but Harry towd him plain an' short he'd bother noane wi sich a chap.

"Yo're noane woth knowin," Harry says. "Aw ne'er had a fayther yet, an' aw con do beaut neaw. Yo'n no need to come here."

"Aw'll come no moore iv aw'm i' th' road," Ben said, slow an' humble. "Aw'd thought to get summat like friendly wi mi childher neaw, but it seems aw munnot. Nowe, aw"ll bother yo no moore."

"Aw's ne'er believe yo con awther whol aw see it, afther 't road yo'n carried on o these years," Harry said; "but whether yo're for awtherin or not matthers nowt. Yo'n kilt every seed o love an' respect 'at met ha groon an' blossom't i' mi heart, an nowt i' this world con ever plant 'em o'er again. Yo'n done that to me an' mine 'at con ne'er be forgetten. Yo're nowt to me—we're noane akin. Aw'll ne'er touch yor hond nor cross yor dur-step; iv there were nobbut us two left i' th' world aw'd keep eaut o' yor seet; aw wouldn't cross t' sthreet to-day to save yo fro deein. So neaw yo known."

"It's takken thee a good while to save up sich a weight

ov hate as that," Ben said. "Aw mun ha wortched hard to addle sich a wage."

He went, beaut another word, feelin a twinge of his owd reckless stupidity rivin at him, an sich a cravin to bowt off on th' spree as he hadn't felt afore sin' emptyin his last pint pot at th' "Royal Oak." For a minute it were a toss-up whether he broke deawn or not, but at t' sthreet corner he passed a little lass walkin wi a crutch, an' th' seet ov her face sent o his wild thoughts flyin in a crack.

"Doesn't ta know me, Polly?" he axed.

"To be sure," hoo said; "yo're mi gronfayther. Aw know yo weel enough, but yo'n like ne'er wanted to be bother't wi me, so aw've kept away."

"Would ta come, then, iv aw wanted thee?"

"To be sure aw would!" Polly says. "Aw've hardly ever had a chance o' speighkin noather to yo nor mi gronmother. That's noane reet, is it; an' me gettin on for eleven year owd?"

"It's wrong, Polly lass! dyeadly wrong!" Ben said, wi summat chawkin in his throat. Aw guess tha knows it were me 'at lamed thee?"

"Ah! but then yo were fuddl't that day, an' didn't know what yo were doin. Aw've getten used to mi leg, an' ne'er think mich on it neaw. Mun aw go wom wi yo, an' see mi gronmother? It's noane mi bedtime yet."

"Ah, come lass! an' God bless thee," Ben said, comfort fo'in on his throubl't mind; so they walked on together—t' sthrong chap an' th' wakely cripple—hond i' hond to Ben's heause.

"Eh, Polly!" Ellen co'd eaut as they went in. "That con ne'er be thee!"

"It's me, gronmother," Polly says, kissin her, settin her crutch in a nook, an' sittin deawn just as iv hoo were awom. "Heaw is it yo never com'n a-seein us, neaw? Iv *yo* wain't come, aw mun."

"Come an' welcome," says Ellen, "an' bring thi fayther too. Heaw hast gwone on wi him, lad?"

"Badly," Ben said. "He co's me wur nor ever th' parson did, an' he'll ne'er ha nowt to do wi us no moore. There's no stirrin him."

"He's a bit o' thy temper in him," Ellen said. "Aw recollect thee sayin when he were a babby 'at iv he grew up like his fayther he'd be reet. What dost think neaw?"

"Well, aw've nobbut mysel to blame when o 's done," Ben said. "It sarves me reet. Aw'm a bad chap, Polly."

"Yo're mi gronfayther," Polly said, lookin as fawse as a fairy godmother, "an' that's o aw've owt to do wi. Iv yo'n bin doin wrong yo mun give o'er, an' things 'll soon come reet."

"Iv we were o like thee we could manage betther," Ben said. "Aw ne'er knew afore to-neet what a good little lass tha's groon

Addle, earn.

into. Tha mun come here oft, an' keep me company. Aw've dhriven o mi own childher away wi mi nowty wark; an' iv mi wife hadn't bin a born angel hoo'd ha gwone too, long sin, an' left me to mysel. Arta noane freeten't on me, Polly?"

"Eh nowe! aw'm noane freeten't on yo. Yo're mi gronfayther. Aw'll come an' sit here sometimes—aw've nowt else to do. Aw sit t' day long awom whol t' other's off at their wark, think, think, think, o bi misel; for aw cawn't wortch nor walk far. Aw'll be sure to come."

"Tha's me to thank for bein so helpless."

"Aw con ne'er recollect bein nowt else," Polly said. "It's so long sin', yo known; aw were nobbut a babby when it happen't, an' aw'm so used to one leg neaw at two ud nobbut bother me."

"What dost think abeaut, sittin so quiet o day?" Ellen axed her.

"O maks!" Polly laughed. "Aw think, an' think, an' think. Sometimes voices come talkin to me, belongin to folk aw've ne'er sin an' shouldn't know iv aw did, tellin me o sorts o' wondherful things; an' sometimes aw just sit dhremin o' fine counthries where there's no smooke nor dirt, nor nowt but rivers o' shinin wayther fo'in deawn broosides, or gooin slow through green meadows full o' ceaws twitchin their tails, an' horses gallopin. Then again aw get among folk olez donned up an' gooin a-walkin, an' laughin childher runnin abeaut wi noather schoo nor facthry to bother 'em, wearin their Sunday clooas every day, getherin fleawers — eh! sich fleawers!—there's nowt like 'em i' th' Park—red, an' blue, an' yollow, an' white as chalk—threspassin i' th' mowin grase beaut ever gettin a summons, an' playin at huddin-peep i' big dark woods where th' sun cawnt make 'em sweat. Done yo think there is sich places, gronfayther?"

"Aw deaubt it, lass; there's noane i' Lancashire, shuzheaw. Aw think God puts these picthers into thi mind, to help thee through t' long heaurs an' stop thee fro frettin."

"Me frettin? Eh! yo don't know mich abeaut me yet, or yo'd ne'er talk so! Heaw con aw fret when everybody's so good to me, watchin to see which con do t' most to plez me? Yo should just see heaw they o looken afther me awom, settin me t' first olez —fayther, mother, an' o t' lot—an' yo'd ne'er think o' frettin. Yo should just see!"

"Aw mun ne'er see that, Polly," Ben said wi a sigh. "But aw'm fain to yer it, for o that. Happy families con be fund somewheere, it seems, iv not i' this heause."

So Ben fund one comforther where he'd little expected or desarved doin, an' went on his hard road wi new sperrit. Iv he'd bin a chap in a book he'd ha done summat greight to make folk

Mowin grase, mowing grass.

think betther on him—risked his life in a fire, venthur't among smopox, saved tuthri folk fro dhreawnin, or some fanciful gam o' that mak—but as he happen't to be wick he'd to tak things as they coome, contentin hissel wi stickin close to his wark, an' thryin to make hissel o' some use in his loase time.

Ashburn had towd Ben once 'at wortchin-chaps sadly wanted some place to meet in ov a neet, where they could have summat gooin on to intherist 'em, an' put their time on i' comfort; so neaw th' anxious weighver thought he'd thry to shap summat o' that sort. Sich things had bin thried mony a time, to be sure, but never i' that teawn beaut some mixthur o' religion or politics. Iv it were to be done t' facthry chaps ud ha to do it theirsel, beaut waitin for oather parson or ambitious gentleman to pathronise 'em, an' Ben felt sure iv some ov his mates could be persuaded to start o' th' job they'd goo forrad wi it. Just to thry it on he took a biggish reawm for a neet, put some forms in it, geet a piano an' a vamper, an' when o were ready axed o th' chaps he knew to come an' spend a neet wi him. Abeaut a score coome, mostly eaut o' curiosity, Ginger among 'em, lookin like a lord in a new Sunday black shuit.

"Sit yo deawn," Ben says as they coome in. "Make yorsel a-wom—t' moore an' t' merrier."

When everybody were planted he went up to th' top end where o could see him, an' made his first speech.

"Aw want to see, chaps, iv we cawn't pass a comfortable heaur or two, an' get some pleasur together. It's oft looked to me 'at we wanten some reawm like this where we con sit, smooke, talk, sing, dance, or owt we'n a mind, wi some sense an' satisfaction. We'n o middlin o' spare time on eaur honds at neets neaw, an' we're oft short o' summut to fill it up. We cawn't olez be hutched up i' th' miserable dog kennels we're forced to live in; we don't want to be olez i' th' aleheause ——"

"That's thrue, that is," Ginger says, sittin wi bwoth honds deep in his breeches pockets. "Aw should know iv onybody does."

"Hear, hear!" a young fellah put in. "Hearken Owd Nick an' his scholar talkin Bible!"

"Who lam't his gronchilt?" another sheauted.

Ben went on when they'd finished. "Aw desarve everything yo con co me, so speighk yor minds. Nobry knows betther nor me what a smart mon aw am to teighch other folk; but aw've gien mi word, honest an' straight, an' aw'll stop noane for bein laughed at."

"Who punced his wife?" sombry axed.

"Go on," Ben said. "Aw con ston it; aw desarve it some

Gronchilt, grandchild.

weel. Yo're noane fond on me, aw know, but yo'll happen gi me some bit o' credit for thryin to mend. Neaw, its a quare thing to me iv we cawn't be sociable. Will onybody sing a song? This piano chap con play owt, so yo'n no need to be bashful."

Wherever a dozen facthry folk getten together there's sure to be tuthri singers among 'em. One geet up to mention 'at Tom Bowlin were gwone "hay-y-loft," an' a recither followed him wi Tennyson's "Charge of the Light Brigade," reight through fro "Half a league!" past "Flashed all their sabrees bare," to th' end. A clog-hornpipe coome in very weel afther that, though eaur lads han lost th' gradely Lancashire steps sin' thoose Music Hall dancers geet so common, an' then th' vamper wakken't everybody up wi what he co'd "Boildew's Overchure to th' Calup." A Rachda concert's never complete beaut th' "Wolf," so a young weighver wi a bad cowd were persuaded to thry his skill at that classical song, an' then some "refreshments" were brought in—tay, coffee, ale, curran loave, cheese, an sichlike. That getten shut on there were moore singin an' talkin' whol ten o' t' clock coome an' Ben turn't his pupils eaut, axin 'em to come again another neet an' bring their wives wi 'em.

So mony coome th' second time ov axin 'at they fund th' reawm too little; but they shapped to make bare floor enough for tuthri couple to dance on, an' as women's tongues con rattle oather wi reawm or beaut there were no want o' sport to fill th' neet up.

Afore his scholars went Ben gav' em another sarmon. "It's plain enough yo liken this sort o' business," he said. "Iv yo'n ony wit yo'll collect tuthri shillin among yorsel, pike eaut a committee, tak a gradely reawm somewheere, an' set abeaut gettin some pleasur at neets. Parties o' this sort are summat like what betther-off folk are used to. Folk wi time an' brass find these getherins are woth their weight i' gowd for makin everybody sociable an' weel-manner't. We're short o' time an' noane weighted deawn wi brass, but we con shap theese meetins weel enough iv we nobbut takken t' throuble, so we're as weel off i' that point as ony folk there is. There's another thing, too. We don't make hawve enough use o' th' Sethurday holidays. They're wasted for most on us, an' will be whol yo women starten o' shappin different.

Iv aw'd my road there'd ha to be no clenin up o' Sethurday afthernoons. Every fine week end aw should like to see whol families settin off together, oather up th' hill sides or to Hollinoth, or somewheere among fresh air an' green fields. Aw'd let nowt ston i' th' road o' thoose thrips—noather blackleadin, nor swillin, nor idleness, nor nowt. They'd cost very little, an' th' savin o' temper an docthor's physic ud be summat moore nor yo'n ony notion on whol yo'n thried it."

As he stopped a minute to tak wynt a woman jumped up an' co'd eaut,

"It's yezzy for yo chaps to talk, but heaw's th' heausewark to be getten through? It taks some on us o Sethurday an' Sunday to shap things for th' week. What are we to do wi young childher? It's no holiday for us iv they're to be carried i' arms, an' yet we connot lev 'em bi theirsel to upset everything or happen brun th' heause deawn. Who's beaun to do th' wark whol we're gaddin off i' t' counthry? It's yezzy talkin!"

"Just thry it on, neaw," Ben said sticking to his text. "Yo'll happen noane find it as hard to shap as yo're thinkin on. Nobbut let it be undherstood at Sethurday's a gooin-off day, an' everything 'll come reaund reet enough. Yo'll find sharper roads o' shiftin yor wark, stop some o' yor needless labbour off, an' come back fro yor walks fresh an' hearty enough to shift a day's wark in an heaur or two. Heaw mony on yo's ever bin reaund Breawn Wardle, across Rooley Moor, to Greenbooth, up th' Tandle Hill, or across th' top o' Blacksnedge? Iv yo done goo it's nobbut once i' five year, an' then it's as mich thought on as a thrip reaund Europe; but yo met just as weel goo every week iv yo would. Th' broos are olez stonnin theere, doin nowt. Yo should be thankful to have a shop like Hollinoth to go to; but nowe! it's noane good enough. Tuthri lads an' lasses gwone theere a dancin, gettin their likenesses takken, an' sichlike, things 'at could be betther done i' th' teawn, but where's o th' groon-up folk? Where's o th' sickly women an' chaps 'at we yer'n grumblin so hard abeaut indigestion, liver complaint, an' so on, spendin a lump o' their wages i' pills or physic every week? Th' women are busy sweepin, dustin, suppin sthrong tay; th' chaps are readin their pappers, smookin at th' hobend, or ceawerin i' th' aleheause. These things are o reet enough i' their place, but woth nowt to th' chance o' gettin eaut undher th' oppen sky. Stir abeaut an' thry a fresh start. Brass is noane everything; we con dhraw in as mich wynt as Queen Victoria, we'n plenty o' good greaund to walk o'er, th' sun shines for us as mich as onybody else, we'n moore pleasur i' watchin grase an' fleawers groo nor oather farmer or londlord, an' there's no want ov innicent, wholsome pleasur lyin within hond-reighch iv we'n a mind to sthretch eaur arms eaut."

Ben were like most reformers—born raythur too soon. His advice were sensible, everybody said, but nobry bother't to follow it. His meetin-reawm plan went on for awhile, an' then folk geet weary o' gooin; as for th' hill-climbin, we con walk up an' deawn th' moors yet beaut bein o'er-creawded mich.

Hobend, fireside.

VII.

A time were comin when Ben were to be thried up whether his mendin ran o through or were nobbut skin deep. He lost his wife. Ellen had fund happy times at last, an' fain would ha lived tuthri year to keep her chang't husban company; but that were noane to be. Hoo deed, levin him bi hissel.

When they laid her in th' coffin Ben sit up wi her a whol neet, feelin as iv o th' life were gwone eaut on him. As he looked at her white still face he thought deep an' long ov o that good woman had done for him, an' heaw he'd sarved her for o her love an' care. He'd ha gien summat that neet to just have his selfish life to start o'er again. There'd be some awtheration in him iv that could be shapped; but it were no use wishin—his time were gwone—he'd had his own stupid road, an' this were th' end on't.

There were hawve a bottle o' brandy stonnin on t' dhrawers, left o'er o' some ordher't for Ellen bi t' docthor. Ben seed it, reighched it deawn, an' tem'd eaut a saup into a gill pot.

"It's no use botherin no longer," he mutther't to hissel. "Live weel or live ill there's nowt but throuble for folk i' this world. This stuff smells sthrong an' good—it's rare physic for wartchin hearts. Howd!" he whisper't, wi a wild look. "What am aw beaun to do? What will little Polly think iv aw goo wrong again? Aw con feel th' owd cravin for dhrink comin o'er me. Iv aw sup this aw s' want moore, an' once started there's no friend like Ashburn to watch me neaw. Am aw beaun to disgrace mysel again wi mi dyead wife lyin afore mi e'en! Nowe!" an' he cobbed pot an' bottle into th' fire grate. "Never no moore i' this world will aw gi mysel up to dhrink. Never!"

He kissed Ellen's cowd foryead, kneel't him deawn at th' bedside, an' axed for help to steer him through t' rough ocean o' life; an' so wi prayers an' brokken sleep he geet through that pitiful neet.

Ben's childher o turn't up at th' buryin, but they'd as little to do wi their fayther as they could shap. Two o' th' lasses went back wom wi him, blew him up a while, an' left him. Most o' th' lads an' lasses had passed a word o' some mak wi him, noane olez ov a very lovin sort, but Harry stood off noather speighkin nor lookin, turnin his back on his fayther as iv he'd ne'er sin th' owd chap afore.

"It sarves me reet afther o," Ben thought, left bi hissel i' th' empty heause. "It's every bit mi own shappin. But Harry's very stupid, very; wur nor me. Well, aw mun do th' best aw con, an' larn to do beaut love an' kin. When aw could have had 'em aw wouldn't. It sarves me reet!"

Afore he'd sit frettin so long th' dur oppen't, an' Polly coome limpin in.

"Heaw are yo, gronfayther?" hoo axed, hangin her shawl up i' th' owd-fashion't womly road 'at were nathural to her.

"Nobbut middlin," Ben said.

"Yo mun keep yor heart up, yo known," Polly says, startin sidin up abeaut th' harstone. "Aw'm thinkin o' comin to heause-keep for yo; becose yo cawn't live here o bi yorsel."

"Tha'rt what!" Ben co'd eaut, fair capped.

"Aw'll come an live wi yo," Polly went on, sweepin th' cindhers up as iv nowt were. "Yo'll want sombry, wain't yo? Aw've groon sthrong an weel neaw, an' th' heause-wark 'll be nowt to me. Aw'll come in to-morn an' get yon bed ready i' th' little chamber."

As t' cindhers were swept up hoo started breetenin t' fendher wi some bits ov emery papper. Ben felt his een runnin o'er to think o' what he owd to that quiet, cheerful lass, an' what a comfort hoo could be to him; but he were freeten't it were o too good to be thrue.

"God bless thee, Polly," he said. "Aw know tha ne'er myens nowt but weel, an' aw'm sure tha coome sthraight deawn fro heaven to keep me reet; but tha knows thi fayther 'll ne'er yer o' sich a thing as thee comin here."

"Wain't he?" says Polly, twitchin her sharp little yead. "Aw'll show yo! Mi fayther olez does as aw tell him."

"He'll ne'er get far wrong iv he does, that's a sure thing. Well, we s' see!"

He did see, an' soon beside, for Polly flitted next mornin, made her bed up, an' sattl't deawn as iv hoo'd done nowt but manage heauses o her life. Harry grumbl't when hoo towd him what her plans were, but didn't thry to stop her, an' happen felt rayther fain at th' bottom to find his little daughther so useful.

As time went on Ben fund eaut there were moore nor him thought weel o' Polly. Hoo'd partly o'ergroon her lameness, walkin beaut crutch wi just a bit ov a limp, an' at eighteen year owd hoo looked so pratty an' good there were no wondher young chaps began hangin abeaut. Afore so long one on 'em persuaded her to tak him for a sweetheart, an' in a while, time slippin on full speed as usal, there were a weddin; so Ben geet another lodger.

"Tha mun undherston, neaw," Polly had said to her chap, "'at mi gronfayther's getten owd, an' there's nobbut me to look afther him; so iv we getten wed we mun live theere. Aw know he likes thee, an' it 'll be o reet."

Th' young chap (Tom Smethurst bi name, joiner bi thrade) said it 'd tak a dyel moore nor that to freeten him; so th' job were sattl't, th' weddin coome off, an' greight-gronchildher started grooin up reaund Ben.

Capped, astonished.

It were nobbut then 'at th' owd chap fairly seed what a foo he'd made ov hissel. Wi his own experience o' bringin childher up he looked to find throuble wi th' risin young uns, an' expected his wisdom met be useful to Polly an' her husban; but they soon showed him 'at they could shap things very weel theirsel. Smethurst gav a dyel o' time to his childher; playin o maks o' gams wi 'em whol they were babbies, teighchin 'em useful pastimes as they grew bigger, an' takkin good care at o times to keep things on a pleasant footin. Afore th' two owdest lads left off gooin to th' dayschoo one on 'em were as hondy as a full mon wi a joiner's bench, an' t' other could turn eaut o maks o' cabinet wark wi lathe an' fretsaw. They were just as weel forrad wi their booklarnin, for their fayther talked to 'em as they wortched, takkin care their lessons were undherstood an' thought on; yet, through o, shappin to make o their wark like play to 'em, an' keep love brunnin o reaund.

"Tha fair licks me, Tom," Ben said one neet as he sit at th' fireside wi Polly an' her husban. "Aw used to think thee rayther a soft sort ov a chap, an' pity thee for havin less brains nor me; an' yet tha'rt as fawse abeaut bringin childher up as a Solomon. Where hast larn't o thi wit? Polly had a groon-up yead at twelve year owd, an' aw think thine mun ha bin th' same."

"Happen so," says Tom. "It's no plannin o' mine, as aw know on; nobbut aw've always thried to keep friendly wi th' young uns, an' teighch 'em to help theirsel a bit."

"Well," Ben said, wi a deep sigh, "tha's hit th' reet road an' aw missed it. Aw con see neaw, but it's too lat."

Ben were fast gettin toard th' end at that time. Soon afther he took to his bed, an' everybody could see it were a case wi th' owd chap. For mony a long year past his name had bin spokken on wi respect, for he'd fairly lived deawn o thoughts ov his owd carryins on, an' shown plain enough he could be as obstinate for good as bad iv he once set that road.

He'd long made friends wi his childher—o but Harry. That were another stupid-yead, noather to be coaxed nor dhriven. Nowt his fayther could do or say ever persuaded Harry 'at there'd bin ony change. He olez looked for Ben brastin eaut into his wild habits again; no length o' years shiftin his belief.

So when Ben lee at th' last, an' sons an' daughthers co'd to see him once again, Harry wouldn't stir a foot. A parson coome to th' deein chap, talkin o' preparin him for th' next world, but Ben wouldn't hearken to him.

"Dunnot tell me!" he co'd eaut, cobbin his arm up. "Yo myen weel, aw darsay; but it's no use comin yeawlin o'er me neaw. Mi wark's done; it mun ston for what it's woth, an' aw'll ston by it, beaut ony chicken-hearted beggin to be letten off what

aw desarve. Justice is what aw want, maisther; an' aw'm in a fair road for havin it afore long. Aw've sthriven hard to do reet sin' Ashburn started me, an' for what aw did wrong afore aw mun tak mi chance. When God co's on me aw'm ready."

"Yer yo, maisther!" Polly said. "There ne'er were a betther chap nor mi gronfayther's bin this twenty year, but he will keep co'in hissel for what's long o'er wi an' cawn't be helped. Yo ne'er seed a betther chap nor mi gronfayther, did yo?"

"At any rate I consider him to be a very good man. Ever since I came into the town I have found him untiring in good works, generous, charitable, kindly, humble minded. A good man without a doubt."

"Ah! yo little known what yo're talkin abeaut," Ben went on. "Iv Ashburn were here he'd gie me a different charicther to that, some soon! An' he knew, iv onybody ever did; for he could read me like a book. Well! o's o'er wi an' done. Polly, lass, a thankful owd-mon's blessin belongs to thee, for makin his lonesome life comfortable. A good daughther, a good mother, a good wife, it's olez bin thy business to spread content an' happiness wherever that sweet patient face o' thine has showed itsel. God bless thee, my bonny lass! God bless thee! When thi gronmother dee'd tha coome into this heause like an angel o' leet; an' it's nobry i' th' world but thee 'at 's saved me fro gooin wrong. Aw could ha liked to see thi fayther once again—he's very stupid, Harry is; very! But aw've nobbut mysel to blame."

"Mun aw run for him, gronfayther? It wain't tak a minute."

Hardly waitin for Ben to look his consent, Polly were off. Hoo fund Harry awom, an' said,

"Fayther! Do come! He's deein, an' wants to see yo."

"Nay, not he!" says Harry. "He ne'er wanted to see nowt no moore o' me nor he could help."

"Fayther, yo mun come," Polly said. "Aw wain't yer sich talk no longer. Put yor cap on this minute an' come wi me."

"Well, aw'll see dhirectly," her fayther mutther't. "Go thi ways back an' tell him aw'll be theere afore long."

Polly ran back, Ben's lip curlin wi a bitther smile as hoo went in bi hersel.

"Aw knew he'd come noane."

"Yigh, he's comin in a minute," Polly gasped, short o' wynt wi hurryin. "He is for sure!"

"He'll be just a minute too lat," Ben said, lettin his yead sink among th' pillows. "Stick to mi hond, Polly."

Hoo put her little hond in his, sittin deawn bi th' bedside, an' i' tuthri minutes a foot seaunded on th' stairs.

"This'll be him," Polly says, lookin reaund.

But hoo were mistaen. A grasy cloth cap wi a reausty-thatched yead undher it rose above th' floor level, followed bi a thin white

face an' slendher body, o on 'em belongin a little pychin chap 'at coome forrad into th' chamber, wi bwoth honds deep in his breeches pockets.

"What, is that thee, Ginger?" Ben axed, wi a faint smile at his owd mate.

"Aw've co'd a seein thee, Ben," Ginger said, very solid, keepin his honds in his pockets. "They say'n tha'rt for deein to-neet."

"It's likely enough, my lad. See tha taks care o' thysel when aw'm gwone. Tha's ne'er brokken teetotal yet, hasta?"

"Nowe."

"Well, come! Aw've bin o' some use i' th' world," Ben said. "Aw've cured Ginger. God bless thee, Polly! Aw shan't last mich longer. Aw'm obleeged to yo for comin, parson. Yo're a good mon, but nowt like Frank."

His voice dwindl't away; he looked to sink deeper into th' bedclooas. Polly felt his hond turnin cowd.

Another foot on th' stairs—steady, maistherful. Harry coome up an' stood bi th' bedside, his steaut lusty figure teawerin big an' sthrong o'er th' grey wasted body on th' bed.

"Faythe r!" he said softly, but Ben ne'er stirred no moore. Th' son met sulk at him neaw iv he'd a mind, an' no harm could be done; or he met soften an' feel shame at his own stupidness beaut doin ony good. He were too lat for oather soothin or frettin that quiet shape lyin afore him. A fairer Judge nor hissel had takken up judgment on th' poor owd sinner; an' what Harry thought or didn't think matther't nowt no moore, noather i' this world nor th' next.

"He is gone!" th' parson said, puttin his hond on Ben's cowd foreyead an' kneelin deawn at th' bedside.

"Gwone!" Harry said, startin. "Nay! Surelee not! Gwone beaut a word!"

"Yo should ha com'n sooner," Polly towd him, wipin her swelled e'en. "Poor gronfayther! What a good owd mon he were!"

"Nay!" Harry says, fair breighkin deawn at last. "Iv tha con think so weel on him afther o he's made thee suffer, surelee aw con make shift to forgive him too. Aw deaubt aw've bin rayther too hard on him. He were mi fayther, aw guess, when o's said. Well! his throubles are o'er wi; but aw fully myent havin just a partin word wi him, too."

"Is he dyead, say'n yo?" Ginger axed, bwoth honds glued in his pockets yet. "He'd getten to a good age, yo known; an' he couldn't live for ever, could he? Eh! he were a rare chap, were Ben! There were nobbut one road wi him, an' that were his own; an' aw once seed him sup fifteen pints ov ale i' less nor two heaurs."

That were Ben Ramsden's epitaph. When he'd spokken it Ginger crept off deawn th' stairs, levin th' parson prayin, Polly howdin her dyead gronfayther's hond, an' Harry stonnin o'er th' bed as iv he'd larn't a lesson he were noane likely to forget whol his own turn coome to threighd that dark slippy road we mun o thravel one bi one.

So Ben, like some o' Bach's fugues, afther wandherin a while through minor keighs finished wi a major chord.

Let o th' good folk 'at may happen to read this tak care abeaut cobbin stones at him, just think once heaw a smo change in his point o' seet made o th' difference between his bein a good chap or a bad un, an' then mind fro fo'in theirsel.

DEAWN I' TH' SHADE.

We'n quite a little world i' th' weighvin shade,
An' folk ov o maks wortchin hard for brade ;
Iv hard yo reckon it to keep on t' throt
Fro year to year end, pottherin reaund th' same spot ;
So mony minutes for yor breakfast time,
So mony moore when th' owd sun's done his climb
To hurry wom an' gulp yor dinner deawn,
Wearin th' same stones i' t' same dull sthreets o' th' teawn ;
So mony heaurs to watch yor loom-slays rock,
Then off to bed whol t' mornin boggart's knock
Rings five on th' window wi a fyersome seaund,
Startin again yor never-endin reaund.
Some co'n it yezzy wark enough—aw've yerd
Blue-blooded folk, 'at ne'er a finger stirred
To addle cheese, make eaut 'at th' best o' luck
Kept dhroppin onto folk i' t' facthries stuck ;
Say, th' job were leet an' comfortin, surelee,
Fro weary brains an' anxious thinkin free,
An' wondher heaw we ever could ha th' cheek
To live like nabobs on a peaund a week,
Wi meight an' clooas sich as they could ne'er
Afford on mony a hundherd peaund a year ;
But, though aw've promised oft to teighch 'em free,
They're noane so keen o' th' job 'at aw con see.
Poor things ! they known no betther. Let 'em talk,
An' through their aimless lives contented walk ;
Aw wish no harm to th' pathronisin crew,
An' wain't begin to measur folk their due,
But aw'm ill-tempted when i' th' grumblin mood
To fancy twelvemonth wark met do 'em good.

Come into th' shade wi me, an' look abeaut ;
Yo'll find some things woth seein, aw've no deaubt,
An' yerin, too, for once yo're fairly in,
Yo'll know five hundherd looms con make a din.
But ne'er mind that, yo'll soon get used to t' clatther,
To feelin sweat rowl deawn yor back like watther,
An' larn to relish th' savvoury size and fluff,
'At makes us thrive like fyerns up Ramsden Clough,
An' whets eaur appetites to edge so sharp
We feel bi noon 'at we could eight a warp.

Look reaund at o these little lads an' lasses,
Here hawve their time an' hawve i' th' schooboard classes;
They'd be as weel off pluckin daisies yet
As shut up here so long to teaw an' fret.
Th' owd maisther says there's nowt like wark to poo
Their wits i' shape afore they gwone to th' schoo;
Aw guess he lets *his* childher lie i' bed
Becose he's fleyed they'll get too sthrong i' th' yead,
Givin 'em change ov air an' dainty bites
To howd 'em deawn to th' level o' these mites.
There's women here wi wark enough awom,
But th' world ud turn noane iv they didn't come;
Beside, they'n t' neet afore 'em, long an' chep,
To nurse, wesh, bake, sing, swill, clen-up an' threp.
These groon-up chaps don't look so fat an' breet
As yo'd expect wi wark so nice an' leet;
It's plain enough 'at when we're off this greaund
We're noane forever whuzzin dumbells reaund,
Climbin up pows or usin th' swingin bar,
Or we met happen change fro what we are.
Iv we 'd beaunce up i' th' mornin soon an' bowd
To pop o'er th' yead i' wayther clen an' cowd,
Walk oft i' t' counthry in a thoughtful way,
Say th' catechism once or twice a day,
An' calm wi porritch eaur excited blood,
Wise neighbours tell us that 'd do us good;
But whether these philosophers could jump
Fro bed at five to scutther off to th' pump,
Or, afther bein stewed ten heaurs a day,
Start sthrugglin wi their muscles, aw cawn't say.
We shouldn't smooke, nor dhrink, nor ware mich brass,
But go to t' lecthur reawm or th' science class;
But theere! It's no use talkin! We're so numb,
We s' slutther on th' owd road whol kingdom come.

There's noane mich change abeaut this weighvin job—
This pleasant, yezzy road o' fillin th' fob;
On t' crossin-off day we con happen put
A thrillin heaur on, deawnin a late cut,
An' oft for crimes repented make amends
Wi floats, thin laps, or knots o' brokken ends.
When wynt fro north or east blows dhry an' sharp
There's apt to be some gam wi weft an' warp,
Though comfort fo's again wi rainy weet,
For cotton thravels best on witchert feet.

Fleyed, afraid. *Threp*, argue. *Witchert*, wetshod.

Sometimes, to make some exthra sport i' th cage,
We sthriken for less wark or bigger wage;
Takkin a holiday wi nowt to spend,
Determin't, *this* time, 'at we'll dee or mend;
Practisin deein for a while, some fain
At last to crawl to th' facthry once again,
Wi o th' fawse craythers yappin at eaur heels
'At never knew heaw wark or clemmin feels,
Yet could ha towd us o fro th' very start,
For sich-like wickedness eaur backs mut smart.

Yon little chap, wi coarse an' pettish face,
Is th' manager 'at gaffers o'er o th' place;
He were a weighver once, but rose an' throve
Whol common folk he meaunted hee above,
Noane so particlar where his clogs met dhrop
Iv he could nobbut safely lond at th' top;
Takkin greight care to steighl o th' brains he could,
An' olez gam to chet for his own good.
He stares some crammed, majestic ordhers dhrops,
Seemin to think there's merit i' seaur chops;
Just hearken heaw he's swearin at yon lass
Becose hoo nudged him as he thried to pass!
Watch him sthrut reaund among these busy folk,
Cobbin at some a condescendin joke,
Stormin at moore wi sudden-ragin fit,
'At makes him stut, an' cough, an' stamp, an' spit;
Ne'er thinkin we con read him for a dunce,
A foo it 'd be wastin time to punce,
An' see through o his impident pretence,
Propped up bi noather gumption, thruth, nor sense.
But howd! Just watch that smile! There's t' maisther yon;
Neaw yo'll find th' manager a different mon;
Watch him wi humble smirk an' shiftin e'e,
Lookin as mild an' honest as con be,
Ready for slavverin on th' greight mon's toe,
Thryin some wit an' cliverness to show,
Bi way o' makin eaut 'at there's ne'er bin
Sich management as his sin' th' world coome in.
T' keen maisther has him weighed—he turns away
Wi cool, "Yes, you've done wonders, I daresay,"
An' little lie-bag, cobbed again i' th' slutch,
I' spite makes o his weighvers beaunce an' hutch;
For, cursed hissel wi sneakin, slavish mind,
He itches independent folk to grind.

Look at this grey-yured, worn-faced woman here;
Hoo's plodded i' that nook for thirty year;

Th' "widow bewitched" we co'n her, i' eaur way,
Becose her husbant bowted off o'er th' say;
Hoo's a good sort enough, an' so were he,
But some road they ne'er managed to agree.
For one thing hoo catched th' clennin fayver bad,
A speck o' dirt were fit to dhrive her mad;
To every visitor hoo sang th' same tune,
"Yo're welcome, but for God's sake wipe yor shoon!"
When th' eautside flags were swilled o' th' Friday neet,
'Twere murdher to her theere to set yor feet,
Th' cosy were nobbut laid for her to slat,
An' th' public met goo ony road but that;
Hoo'd ston at th' dur wi th' swillin-brush, an' sauce
Threspassin folk, 'at dared to walk across.
Inside hoo made things lively for her chap;
He hardly durst sit deawn or doff his cap;
He couldn't stir beaut knockin summat croot,
Or makin fearful havoc undherfoot;
Iv ever he'd a wish i' th' heause to stop,
Hoo'd buckle to an' swill him eaut o' th' shop,
Or iv he stood that make him cough an' wink
Wi dust, or wi French polish reause a stink.
They fitted a front reawm up when they'rn wed,
Where th' husbant looked to rest his weary yead
O' th' Sunday, but howd off! hoo locked th' reawm dur,
An' nobry were alleawed inside but her;
Hoo nobbut went to dust, clen up, an' that,
For sittin deawn myent squeezin th' cushins flat.
A little lad were born, an' for awhile
Their lives were breeten't bi his bonny smile;
But one day, through t' durs flyin front an' back,
I' one o' th' clennin fits, he shapped to tak
A cowd 'at sent him to another lond,
Levin his mother wi moore time i' hond.
Some shoots o' love fro th' parents' hearts had sprung,
An' reaund that pratty chilt had twin't an' clung,
But wither't soon when his support were ta'en,
An love ne'er bother't thoose poor folk again;
So climbin plants, thrained reaund abeaut a rod,
Their uphowd gwone, fo deein upo' th' sod.
Aw let on th' husbant once at his back dur,
Lookin so lost aw're forced to stop an' sper
What ailed him. "Nowt," he says; "but aw mun wait
Eautside whol th' mappin's getten eaut o' th' gate.
Aw'm gettin stowed; mi patience is o'er-thried,"
An' then he rubbed his e'en, an' snurched, an' cried,

Mappin, mopping. *Snurched*, sniffed.

"Tha foo!" aw said. "Dost co thisel a mon?
Goo in an' leather her as hard's tha con!
Breighk oppen th' pahlour dur, make th' cushins fly,
An' wipe thi clog-irons on her napery;
Pile up o t' furnithur i' tuthri yeps,
An' cob her faldherdals deawn th' cellar steps;
Cob *her*, beside, iv hoo makes owt to do,
An' then there'll be some comfort for yo two."
"Nay, nay!" he said; "it isn't 'at hoo's nowt,
T'best shappin aw con mak 'll be to bowt;
Left bi hersel hoo'll have a chance to scrat
Beaut plaguin onybody obbut th' cat;
Iv *it's* noane fairly shuited it con preawl
Abeaut i' th' yard, or sit on th' slate an' yeawl;
That's where aw'm licked, for through some blundherin seet
Aw've bin brought up to sleep inside at neet."
So th' brokken-hearted chap pyched off an' went,
Levin his wife to yammer and repent.

This limber-jointed lad's a famous runner,
At five-mile scuttherins a gradely stunner;
His mates sayn Choppy Warbutton could ne'er
Come near him when he's runnin sthraight an' square,
An' Thraycle, though a sweet un in his day,
Owns up 'at Tommy licks him far away.
He's built for speed an' lastin peawer, yo see,
Deep chest, thin rib, long leg, an' clen-cut knee;
When sthripped his skin's like marble, mapped wi blue,
Wi every joint an' muscle fashion't thrue—
Obbut his cawves—they'n raythor gwone to th' dogs
Through him an' his forefaythers wearin clogs.
There's a square fielt above where oft at neet
Yo'll find Tom exercisin his swift feet,
His thrainer an' a friend or two i' th' nook,
To time him, rub his 'lastic shanks, an' look
'At nobry's sneakin reaund to watch him shap
An' get him set fur back i' th' hondicap.
"Two seconds slow!" t' crammed thrainer snarls. "By gum!
Aw'll give th' job up iv tha keeps smookin, Tum!
Tha'll ha no wynt at o left in a bit;
A week off th' races, an' tha'rt nowt like fit!
Think on my name's dependin upo thee,
An' iv aw cob thee o'er where wilta be?"
So th' freetent runner promises to mend,
Beggin th' owd chap to gaffer him to th' end.

Yammer, to cry fretfully.

On race-days Tommy i' full glory shows,
Donned i' breet silks, leet-balanced on his toes.
Ready to shoot away at th' pistil-crack
On his long journeyin reaund t' curvin thrack,
A steady swing a mile or two he keeps,
An' past o t'other runners gently creeps,
Then dhrops behinnd again wi cunnin blint
As iv he'd run hissel fair eaut o' wynt;
His honest mates are ready neaw to bet—
"Come! aw'll tak three to one on Tummy yet;
He's lookin ill, that's thrue;—it's this wot sun;
Tha'll nobbut lay me two? Ger off! Well, done!
He'll lond noane—it'd pay him t' best to sthrike,
But aw mun back him just for friendship like."
Then up creeps dodgin Thomas wi a wap,
Passin two runners in another lap;
Then howds a bit, shammin to blow an' grunt,
But foot by foot keeps pychin nar to th' front:
Wi th' first mon neck an' neck he thries a poo,
Dhrawin him eaut to see what he con do,
An' wins bi tuthri yard i' yezzy style,
Whol cheted loisers curse an' backers smile.

Here's a young woman weel woth lookin at,
Wi cheerful face, breet yure, an' spotless brat,
Olez good-temper't, everybody's friend,
Ready when axed a helpin hond to lend;
Fayther an' mother Liza keeps awom,
Where t'other childher ne'er find time to come;
Hoo's th' youngest ov eleven, but t' other ten
Con make o t' bit o' brass they getten sken,
They're o moore likely Liza's help to ax
Nor thry th' owd folk to carry on their backs;
They're o wed off an' nicely eaut o' th' gate,
But hoo, poor lass! for th' weddin-day mun wait.
One tells her, "Come! aw'll tak thee to Belle Vue,
An' buy thee a new bonnet. Tha'rt a foo
To wear thisel i' lumps to keep th' owd folk;
Tha's done thi share—it's getten past a joke;
Let t'other childher have a turn, an' come
To join me at a comfortable wom.
Ne'er heed Bill Lomas—wi a wife like thee
To keep him he'd be olez upo' th' spree;
He'd let thee slave thisel to t' dyeath, my lass,
To keep him reet for sleauchin-time an' brass."
"Would he?" laughs Liza. "Tha does weel to tak
A chance o' co'in Bill behinnd his back;

Tha dursen't tell him th' hawve on 't to his face,
For weel tha knows he's th' steadiest chap i' th' place.
He's offer't, iv aw'll nobbut be his wife,
To find th' owd folk a dacent wom for life,
An' as for cobbin brass away on th' spree
Aw'd sooner thrust mysel to Bill nor thee."
"Is that it?" grumbles th' fellah, lookin seaur;
"Tha'd betther snap him up, then, whol tha's peawer;
Sich angels seldom com'n through t' world to creep,
Most on us thinken one's enough to keep."
"Nowe!" Liza says, "aw'll saddle noane o' Bill
Wi my relations whol aw've weighvin skill;
Aw'll hurry noane to wed wi ony mon,
Iv aw'm woth havin aw'm woth waitin on."

Next comes Dick Scwofilt, eaur chief music-chap,
Wi tunes ov o maks undherneighth his cap;
His yead's so crommed wi ditties sad an' breet
He yeawls an' whistles at 'em day an' neet,
Fingerin th' keighless loom as t' cloth laps reaund,
His nimble clog-irons ringin time on th' greaund.
Dick's ne'er had lessons, as he's free to tell,
His music's groon inside him ov itsel;
When quite a babby he could cry i' tune,
An' mark his dinner-time wi clattherin spoon;
He were a concertina player born,
An' larn't to vamp afore he'd breeches worn.
He bothers noane wi notes—it's o bi ear,
An', like th' owd crows i' Spotlan', olez theere.
On t' rook o' thrained professors Dick looks deawn;
"Aw'll vamp 'em o," he'll say, "for hawve a creawn;
They're lost beaut papper, they cawn't play a song
Beaut practisin wi th' singer ever so long,
An' iv he wants th' keigh shiftin deawn or up
They'll gawp at him as dateless as a tup!"
Dick vamps on t' weekly free-an'-easy neet
At th' "Silver Shuttle," deawn i' Cotton Sthreet,
When th' singin-reawm wi customers is packed,
An' ale teems through it in a catharact,
Whol cleauds o' bacco smooke hang reaund so sthrong
They sattle solid on yor e'en an' tongue.
Th' owd cheerman, pyerch't at th' table-end i' state,
Knocks wi his hommer to stop some o' th' prate,
Sheauts "Mr. Pogson will oblige," an' through
O th' reechin creawd comes Pogson to Dick's stoo.

Vamp, to accompany songs by ear in defiance of musical rules.
Gawp, gape. *Dateless*, dull of understanding.

"It 's 'Th' Anchor's Weighed,' lad,' th' singer whispers soft ;
"Aw darsay tha'll ha yerd it middlin oft ;"
"Just once or twice," says Dick, wi merry blink,
"What keigh?" an' Pogson says, "One flat, aw think."
Dick saws off th' symphony wi ready knack ;
"Ordher!" bawls th' cheerman, fottin th' board a crack ;
"Play it again," says Pogson wi a cough,
An' when it comes his turn again brasts off:
"The tear fell gently from er heye when last
We parted on the shore (Howd! not so fast!),
Her boasom eaved with many a—dhrot it! Dick!
Tha's pitched me reet deawn where mi voice is thick ;
Ladies an' gentlemen, it's th' vamper's faut ;
Tighten thi scrowl, mon ; this mak's up to naught!"
He's followed bi a bass chap, rumblin deawn
Whol one met think he're beaun to shake o th' teawn ;
Then comes a comic, makin th' women bawl
Bi singin some poor thrash fro th' music hall ;
An' so whol turnin eaut time they gwone on,
Gettin what pleasur eaut o' th' job they con.
Dick teighches music, too, i' tip-top style,
Some ov his scholars com'n above a mile,
For he's weel known to have t' thrue saycret art,
An' th' pupils he turns eaut are olez smart.
"Look at th' piano," Dick 'll say. "Tha sees
'At th' black keighs ston i' lumps o' twos an' threes ;
Bi that it's yezzy ony keigh to spot,
An' tha con very soon get used to th' lot.
Howd thi arms stiff an' keep th' leaud threadle deawn
(Aw've cut a wedge for yon o' mine i' th' teawn),
An' keep thi wake back-fingers eaut o' th' gate,
There's seldom wark for moore nor six or eight,
Play th' air i' octaves weel up t' thribble clef,
An' thump away i' th' bass whol folk are dyeaf ;
Larn hawve a dozen pieces off bi heart,
An' tha con olez shap to tak thi part."
Wi simple rules like these Dick made his way
To th' preaud position 'at he howds to-day ;
We're o weel sure 'at iv he'd nobbut brass
O th' music chaps i' Lunnon he could pass—
Barrin like one or two o' th' finest crem,
Rubbinstone, Sullivan, or some o' them.

Neaw here's another woman, comely yet,
Though thin an' grey as iv hoo'd had to fret ;

Scrowl, a regulating attachment of the power loom.

Ten year sin' Sally were so fine an' smart
'At young Sam Isherwood fair lost his heart;
Hoo wed him an' left th' shade, for Sam were sure
Hoo'd ha no need for weighvin ony moore;
Heawever, tuthri month sin' hoo coome back,
Hawve clemmed, ill-donned, her shop again to tak,
An' buckled to at wark wi reet good will,
Larnin again her long-forgetten skill.
"Sally, my lass," aw said, "tha'rt lookin worn;"
"Eh, mon," hoo says, "there's bin eight childher born
Sin' aw wed Sam, an' though he's raythor preaud,
An' desperate hard to keep us o he's teawed,
We'n fund it eaut 'at pride 'll never do
Whol we'n to keep yon childher o at th' schoo.
Aw s' ha mi honds full neaw, to weighve bi day,
An' every neet mi heausewark side away,
But there 'll be summat t' eight, shuzheaw, an' that
Gwoes fur toard makin folk content an' fat.
Iv we con get another year weel past
We s' have a lad hawve-time, an' get on fast."
"Thoose cliver chaps i' th' parliment," aw said,
"Bi o aw yer, han ta'en it i' their yead
To put th' age up, an' let no childher scrat
Whol twelve year owd—what done yo think o' that?"
"Eh! but they munnot do!" hoo says; "they'n sin
But little, or they'd never make that din;
Heaw mony on 'em's rear't a thribe ov eight,
Four on 'em twins, an' kept 'em reet for meight?
Iv sich a foolish gam they're beaun to start
They'll breighk aboon one toilin mother's heart."
Hoo breeten't famously i' tuthri week,
An' roses gated bloomin on her cheek;
They're gettin on some weel, though hoo's to slave
Mornin to neet, an' every penny save.
Aw noticed t'other day hoo looked hawve dyead,
An' axed th' poor woman iv hoo'd bin i' bed;
"Nowe, aw've bin sittin up o neet," hoo says;
"Yo see, it's Whissunday i' tuthri days,
An' t' little lasses mun ha frocks to walk
I' th' schoo procession, or there'll be some talk;
Aw cawn't afford 'em clooas ready made,
So aw've to stitch 'em whol aw'm eaut o' th' shade;
Monday aw wesh whol o mi limbs fair wartch,
Tuesday aw've o mi things to iron an' starch,
On t' Wednesday aw bake for th' hungry crew,
Thursday aw've o mi mendin wark to do,

Friday an' Sethurday aw swill an' clen,
An' Sunday brings o maks o' jobs again ;
So, to make th' little uns a dacent seet,
Aw'm like fair forced to tarry up at neet.
Aw deaubt yo'll think mi pride's noane flitted yet,
But aw cawn't bide to see t' poor childher fret."
"That's honest pride," aw said ; "it's born o' love,
An' little selfish feelin's hee above ;
Tha'rt reet enough to make thi childher smart,
Among their mates to tak a gradely part,
But tha con never keep this business up,
Wortchin bwoth neet an' day for bite an' sup ;
Why, niggers never han to scrat like thee ;
Thy job's a vast dyel wur nor slavery."
"Ah, well !" hoo sighed, "aw con but do mi best ;
Happen i' heaven aw s' get a bit o' rest."

This is a bettin chap, long odds he taks,
For they're eautsidhers mostly 'at he backs ;
He bothers noane wi favourytes an' sich,
Becose he reckons th' owners are too rich,
Carin nowt whether th' horses lond or loise,
Nor whether backers win or make a noise.
He thinks hissel a brid o' th' fawser end,
But some road olez shaps his wage to spend
Beaut gettin for it owt to see or feel,
An' that shows up his fawseness middlin weel.
It's seldom beef's fund cookin in his pon,
His wife an' childher catchen what they con
I' th' shape o' meight an' dhrink ; his brass mun goo
To th' race-greaund, where it's chance enough to groo.
It looks to me 'at iv he'd plant it eaut
I' th' yard or t' cellar, it met sooner spreaut,
Or iv it didn't he could olez find
What he'd put in whenever he'd a mind.
He pays for telegrams an' stable news,
Hopin to chet some less enleeten't foos ;
An' iv he larns, just when a race is run,
Bi wire or sportin papper, which horse won,
He'll hunt up some poor fellah noane i' th' swim,
An' wi a cheerful conscience swindle him.
On race days he's as restless as a cowt,
Wi hardly time enough his meals to bowt ;
He loises sleep, gets bated for bad wark,
Keepin hissel on pins fro leet to dark ;
An o' through winther-time he sulks an' frets
For spring to blossom wi fresh crops o' bets.

He oft comes botherin wi "reglar snips,"
"Sure pots o' brass," an' t' sthraightest o' sthraight tips;
"Look here," he said once, "don't be sich a foo,
"Get four legs on thi wage an' make it goo!
Aw've sich a chance as hardly ever comes,
Forty to one, an' sure as thrums is thrums;
Scrape up o t' brass tha has an' daub it on,
This horse is bund to win, do what they con."
"Nay, come!" aw said; "aw'm noane a greedy chap,
Nor keen wi other folk good brass to swap;
Tha's lost a dyel, Sam, so it's nobbut fair
'At in this grand tit's winnins tha should share;
Tak my advice, lad; back it for a pot,
An' then tha'll oather loise or win a lot."
"It's sure to win, there'll be no stoppin it;
Aw've put three peaund on, an' we're beaun to flit
Wi th' winnins, for yon heause gets full o' soot,
An' it's a slutchy disthrict undherfoot."
Aw thought he'd betther wait whol th' race were o'er,
But he'd gie notice theere an' then, he swore;
He nobbut wished he're hawve as sure he'd get
To heaven as sure that horse could lond his bet.
When th' race day coome Sam felt hissel so rich
'At weighvin didn't fit his humour mich;
He stopped at noon for hawve a day on th' spree,
"It's reet enough, owd brid!" he says to me,
"Co in to-neet at th' 'Yells an' Reed,' to sup
Good health to th' bonny tit 'at's getten th' Cup;
Surelee it should afford us hawve a day,
Aw s' win moore brass nor aw con cart away!"
Aw co'd when t' facthry stopped, an' fund a pyerch
I' th' tap-reawm, full but quiet as a church;
A gang o' chaps sit solemn, beaut a seaund,
Wi dismal faces an' dull e'en on th' greaund;
"What neaw?" aw axed; "another weighver dyead?"
Then every chap hove up his dhroopin yead,
An' sich a volley o' wot curses flew
As met ha' bor't mi carcase through an' through.
"Neaw Sam," aw said, "art beaun to ston that gill?"
He clear't his throat an' mutther't "Aw've o th' will,
But t' brass is done an' t' lonlord wain't gie sthrap;
So pay thisel, an' ston me one, owd chap."
"O reet!" aw said; "owt to relieve a cough;
What's up? Aw thought these bets were paid sthraight off."
"They are," he greawl't wi curses; "that's just it!"
"Well, there's a summat here 'at's past my wit;

Tha reckon't winnin when this day coome reaund
Somewheere i' th' neighbourhood o' six score peaund."
He grunted eaut, "Aw've cobbed three peaund away;
Th' horse 'at aw backed were scrat eaut yestherday;
Aw wish we'd th' owner here 'at's made this wreck,
Aw'd scrat him eaut, too, or else breighk his neck!"
Then th' cursin chorus gav another wail,
Sluttherin up an' deawn th' chromatic scale.
Wi talk 'at ony dacent ears ud shock,
Welly enough to make o th' aleheause rock.
"Howd on a bit!" aw said; "just hearken me;
Yo'n nowt to grumble at as aw con see;
Yo knew at forty peaund to one could ne'er
Be won or lost bi dyelins owt like fair;
Becose yo'n lost th' odd peaund there's o this bother,
But yo'd ha takken t' forty wi a wuther,
Though t'other loisers ud be forced to thry
Full forty stings like this 'at's made yo cry;
When luck's again yo set yor teeth an' grin,
Iv yo cawn't loise yo don't desarve to win."
T'other were nowt to them, they said, an' blew
Me rarely up for talkin like a foo,
So toard mi baggin aw began to shap,
Hopin 'at Sam had larn't some wit, poor chap.

Here's an owd gronmother; just rest yor e'e
On th' wizen't dame, an' yer her talk to me.
"Aw'm weighvin yet, yo sin, an' feel as reet
For wark as ever sin' aw felt mi feet;
Aw'm sixty-five—owd age we connot chet—
But betther nor a lot o' dyead uns yet;
An' here i' t' facthry aw look like to stop
Whol aw'm laid sideway in a darker shop.
Aw'm noane behowden to this wark, that's thrue,
But summat to fill time up aw mun do,
An' nobry i' their nathral wits ud cob
A chance away o' followin this job.
Mi sons keep tellin me to stop awom,
But aw keep tellin *them* aw'm fain to come,
For weighvin's sich a job as never were,
Aw s' stow noane on it in a hundherd year.
Aw've brass 'at me an' David shapped to save,
An' brass, they say'n, 'll be no use i' th' grave;
They're reet enough, but iv aw spend o neaw,
Levin 'em nowt at last, they'll look some feaw;

Dyelins, dealings. *Stow*, stall or tire.

Beside, a yezzy life aw s' never seech,
For idleness bites at me like a leech;
Iv sattlin deawn at Seauthport aw're to goo,
There'd be some deein in a week or two.
When aw were young, wi David deep i' love,
Together mony a year we lived an' wove—
Ah! mony a happy year! Though neaw they're gwone,
An' dyeath's ta'en eaut o' th' world mi good owd mon,
Aw s' ne'er forget mi wedded days wi him,
Nor love him less nor when he're young an' thrim.
Yo known what David were—a chap 'at towd
Just what he thought, i' talk bwoth short an' bowd,
Ne'er missin t' maisther's wark to do his own,
An' clen i' conscience as a new-sceaur't stone;
He made me feel some preaud to be his wife,
An' he ne'er lost a quather in his life.
There couldn't be a betther job nor this,
Aw'm capped some takken it so mich amiss;
We known what time to start an' when we'n done,
As soon as th' engine stops away we gwone,
Wi mony a heaur at neet to rest eaur shanks,
An' brass at th' week-end to put into th' banks;
Iv folk were o as satisfied as me
There'd be less yeawlin eaut for charity."
Good luck to thee, owd craythe r! We mun hope
Thi road fro here 'll be up th' heavenly slope;
If tha'rt to join thi husbant tha mun goo,
For there's smo deaubt *he's* safely up that broo.
Theere, when th' last pay day comes he'll make a stir;
For, among th' creawd o' betther folk an' wur,
There'll noane be mony 'at con ston an' say
They never lost a quather ov a day.

Look at yon woman, wi her yollow skin,
An' restless, jealous e'e, 'at taks o in.
Poor Mally! Iv there's onybody wick
Desarvin pity an' a good tough stick,
Hoo does; her judgment's getten thrut skew-wift,
At seein injuries hoo's quite a gift;
There's nobry likes her, in her own consait,
We're thryin hard to shunt her eaut o' th' gate;
Hoo's hung abeaut wi enemies, hoo'll tell,
Ne'er dhremin it's o fancy in hersel.
Aw'm soory for her, but it turns me vexed
To yer her sniff an' yeawl, an' quote a text

Skew-wift, askew.

Her patient self-denyin mind to show,
When hoo's ne'er had sich furnithur at o.
Just give her hawve a chance ho'll cry an' heighve,
Betther complaints nor pieces hoo con weighve,
Wondherin why hoo ever coome on t' yearth,
Wheere hoo's sin nowt but misery fro birth;
Where everybody's set again her hard,
Measurin wrongs an' insults eaut bi th' yard;
Hoo cawn't tell what hoo's doin here i' th' shade,
An' thinks t' Lord's set her to a leausy thrade;
Th' weighvers o reaund abeaut hoo cawn't abide,
Becose they watchen her at every side,
Ceauntin heaw mony cuts hoo carries in,
Heaw oft her tenther gwoes for cops wi th' tin,
Tootin an' meddlin shameful every road;
Hoo never liked but neaw hoo's gradely stowed;
Hoo cawn't tell what they're thinkin at, hoo's sure,
They make her shame whol hoo could dhrop through t' floor.
Iv they'd just study what hoo's had to meet—
Husbant an' childher bowted eaut o' th' seet,
Her back so painful hoo con hardly bend,
Showin some plain hoo's gettin to th' far end,
Wi ne'er a friend i' th' world to co her own—
They'd surelee awther, or they'n hearts o' stone.
So hoo keeps makin throubles eaut o' nowt;
No wondher t' worried husbant had to bowt,
An' t' childher too, to chet that awful tongue
At mut be reausty when it first were hung.
What makes things wur, th' owd besom does o' t' thricks
Hoo thries so hard on other folk to fix;
There's nowt con stir inside her range o' seet
But Mally 'll be aware on 't soon an' breet,
An' iv for ony weighvers hoo's a grudge
There's ne'er no quietness whol hoo's made 'em budge.
"Yon grinnin snicket mun tak care!" hoo'll say,
"Aw've stood her impidence this mony a day,
An' bin some patient—never nobry moore;
Why! nobry else ud ston sich thricks, aw'm sure;
Hoo'd betther mind, aw say, for iv aw speighk
Th' hawve 'at aw know a thunnerbowt 'll breighk
Above her yead. Aw'll sattle her, some sharp!
Hoo threw on Belfielt Club for a soft warp,
An' hoo'll goo gaddin reaund wi ony chap
'At's getten brass, iv he'll just cob his cap.
Hoo's no shame in her, or hoo'd stop awom,
Brush her frizzed yure, an' breighk that fancy comm;

Tootin, whispering.

Astid o' tellin folk aw'm crammed an' nowt,
An' o sich lies. Hoo'll ha to mind, or bowt !"
So Mally grumbles, wi a list as black
Ready to pin to onybody's back,
For hoo's just wit enough to see a faut
But ne'er sees merits, or else ceaunts 'em naught.
Poor should-ha-bin ! some pity we mun feel,
But hoo desarves a leatherin some weel ;
Hoo're olez coddl't sin' hoo first could wink,
It's mostly that 'at's ruin't her, aw think,
An' nowt like gettin gradely hurt for once
Her maudlin thoughts away ud help to punce.

There's a young chap yon, wortchin i' th' side alley,
'At's noane acquainted yet wi his own vally ;
He's very shy an' quiet, an' some few
Laugh at him here for teighchin th' Sunday schoo.
Whatever mak o' weather Sunday brings,
Lijah puts on his best black chapel things,
Tees up a bit o' dinner in a cleaut,
An' sets off bowdly on a two-mile eaut.
His schoo stons somewheere upo' th' borough side,
An' Lijah gaffers o'er it wi some pride,
Teighches th' big scholars, their behaviour thrims,
An' grinds th' harmonium whol they're singin hymns ;
When t' mornin lesson's o'er an' t' childher gwone
He sits him deawn to get his eightin done,
Then reads a chapther, sings, or plays a tune
Whol th' classes meet again i' th' afthernoon ;
Gets on his road when four begins to chime,
Londin hissel awom bi baggin time ;
An', havin fairly done his wark, at neet
He gwoes to th' chapel for a special treat.
Young chaps i' th' shade con chuckle at o this,
An' think him soft his haliday to miss,
But iv they copied him they'd be no wur,
Astid o' decoratin th' ale-heause dur,
Or sluttherin through t' fields, a noisy rook,
To poison th' scented air wi bacca smooke.
Leaud as they dog at Lijah they weel know
He's moore inside nor his mild face con show,
An' quiet as he looks they darnot thry
To damage onybody when he's by ;
Aw've sin him knock a bigger chap to th' floor
For pooin a young tenther reaund bi th' yure,
Ston o'er him, like St. George wi t' dhragon deawn,
Freetenin th' fellah wi his awesome freawn,

Then help him up wi softenin face, an' say
He axed his pardon for so givin way.
Once t' lads had played a rat some cruel thrick,
Lijah ran at 'em wi a pickin stick,
His e'en afire, red murdher in his look,
They stopped to argey noane but off they took,
An' i' their terror ran so far away
They londed noane at th' shade again that day.
He'll let folk carry on again hissel
As they'n a mind, an' ne'er were known to tell
Ov owt they did. One gawpyead slat some oil
On Lijah's looms, an' shapped two cuts to spoil;
Th' o'erlooker scented mischief, swore he'd kill
Th' oil-slatther an' then punce him eaut o' th' mill,
An' co'd on Lijah to tell o he knew,
Or else he'd bother noane but seck him too.
"Well," Lijah says, "then aw s' be like to stop;"
So deawn he laid a shuttle an' a cop,
Knocked o his sthraps off, put his jacket on,
An' in a twinkle eaut o' th' shade were gwone.
"Dal it!" says th' o'erlooker, "aw've bin too sharp,
A betther weighver never deawn't a warp;
Here, Billy! run an' fot eaur Lijah back,
Aw'll sattle this job on another tack."
Lijah coome in as quiet as he went,
Startin his looms afore a word he spent;
"Neaw, lad," th' o'erlooker says, "it's noane thy faut;
But tell me, who's this arrant good for naught?"
"Aw'll pay for th' cuts," says Lijah, "say no moore;
He'll ne'er do nowt o' th' sort again, aw'm sure."
Says Gawpyead, "Aw cawn't ston this o at once;
It's me 'at did it, gaffer—yo con punce!"
"Thee!" sheauts th' o'erlooker, catchin him bi th' scruff,
"Surelee tha's bin quite troublesome enough,
Wi o th' bad wark an' blundherin tha's made,
Beaut puttin onto th' quietest lad i' th' shade;
Pack up thi thraps an' scutther, whol tha'rt wick,
Or slap among thi ribs mi clogs 'll rick!"
"Come!" Lijah says, "just thry him once again;
He's mendin, an' aw'll help him neaw an' then;
He nobbut did it in a jokin fit;
He'll make a reet good weighver in a bit."
So Gawpyead paid for t' cloth an' sattl't th' do,
An' neaw he's helpin Lijah up at th' schoo.

Wherever folk may sthrive, at wark or play,
There's mostly one to carry th' palm away;

We'n a young fellah 'at con make moore brass
Nor ony one beside him, lad or lass.
Look at his sharp breet e'en an' rapid hond,
An' part o' th' saycret yo con undherstond ;
Watch him awhile, an' notice wi what care
He slips his cops i' th' shuttles sthraight an' square,
Shappin some hondy when a weft fork's dhropped
To start his loom afore it's fairly stopped ;
Ne'er-endin foreseet th' list o' talents swells
He lets no lumpy yorn crash through his yells,
But watchin carefully his risin warp
Pikes eaut o snarls an' knots some clen an' sharp ;
He stons noane gawpin at a float or thrap,
But shaps abeaut an' reets it in a wap ;
An' every minute between th' buzzer's seaund,
Fro six to hawve-past five he's upo' th' greaund ;
He comes noane sluttherin five minutes late,
So sleepy he con hardly knock th' mill gate,
An' he'd soon tell yo it were noane a joke
To stop a loom afore t' last engine-sthroke.
Wi o his merits he's noane liked so mich ;
He's greedy, an' o'er-anxious to get rich,
A thing unnathural to th' weighvin breed—
It's throublesome to tent so fine a reed ;
His thrift's bred in him, for his fayther made
A bit o' brass bi nippin t' grocery thrade ;
It's said he'd split a curran to make weight,
But some road, wi th' expense o' rent an' meight,
For o his scrattin he ne'er shapped to save
Enough to pay for plantin him i' th' grave ;
Th' son had to bury him, an' oft he'll fret
Becose wi th' guardians he'd to square that debt.
He's never sin at supperin nor stir,
At neet he's never fund eautside his dur;
He's sign't teetotal, an' he eights no beef,
No mak o' pleasur gies his mind relief;
Ax him to goo to concert or to play
An' he'll boil o'er wi temper hawve a day;
For church or chapel sarvice he's no wish,
Becose he's freeten't o' th' collectin dish;
He'd happen buy a dacent shuit or two,
But tailyors charge so mich he darnot goo.
So deawn his narrow cosy let him pass,
Despised an' pointed at, but huddin brass ;

Yells, healds. *Float* or *thrap*, faulty places in the woven cloth. *Tent*, tend. *Cosy*, causeway. *Huddin*, hiding.

Content enough through time's revolvin shocks
To make hissel a walkin savins-box.

Look next at Martha Pillin—hoo's a face
As honsome yet as ony i' this place,
Though moore nor forty year th' good woman's sin,
Wi noane too mich ov happiness cobbed in.
Some twenty year back Martha's sweetheart dee'd,
Just when they'd hoped together to be teed ;
He fell deawn th' hoist, hurtin hissel so bad
There weren't a bit o' chance o' savin th' lad.
Wi lovin care hoo watched him day an' neet,
Claimin that duty as her own bi reet,
An' when too soon he faded eaut o' life
His e'en last rested on his promised wife.
Hoo shed no tears 'at ever folk could see,
But o could feel her depth o' misery.
" Aw'm gooin fast," her deein sweetheart said,
When, near his end, hoo watched beside his bed ;
" We looked for love an happy days i' store,
An' this is th' end on't—o mi dhremin's o'er !
But aw mun tell thee once afore we part,
Though long aw've loved thee an' wi o my heart,
Feelin some preaud for thee to sthrive an' teaw,
Aw never loved thee lass, as aw do neaw !
Aw'm bund for some fresh counthry eaut o' th' seet ;
An' cawn't tell where aw s' be to-morn at neet ;
Happen when hovven off this slutchy throd
Aw s' get a footin on some breether sod ;
Happen wi th' o'erlookers aw shan't agree,
Or summat else may plague an' bother me ;
But whol aw've life enough to see or feel,
Where thoughts an' looks 'll be aw know some weel !"
Hoo kissed his batther't face an' laid his yead
Tendherly on her thremblin breast, an said :
" Think on aw've noane so long to tarry here,
We're happen nobbut partin tuthri year ;
Aw'll pray to God, wi hope an' longin bowd,
To keep thee safe i' th' everlastin fowd,
An' when He's ready send for me to come,
'At we con meet together theere, awom.
Aw s' ne'er forget thee shuz heaw long aw live,
Aw've noather love nor heart again to give ;
Nobry i' th' world shall e'er come cwortin me ;
Aw've gien my promise—aw belong to thee !"

Teaw, toil. *Hovven*, lifted.

So, breet wi love and hope, he smilin dee'd,
Levin her faithful heart to warch an' bleed.
Seldom to th' cemetary aw con goo
Beaut findin Martha near his grave on th' broo ;
Some oft hoo walks theere, whisperin to hersel,
As iv to th' buried mon her thoughts hoo'd tell,
An' every Aysther Sunday lays a knot
O' fresh-poo'd yollow fleawers on th' sacred spot.
Yet oft yo'll find i' mony another scene
Her sweet expectin face an' honest e'en ;
Iv some poor family gets down i' th' shell,
They cawn't do betther nor their throubles tell
To Martha, for hoo's olez brass to spare,
An' olez ready what hoo has to share ;
Iv illness gets a neighbour deawn i' bed,
" Fot Martha Pillin " 's oft t' first thing 'at's said ;
Hoo's a rare nurse, so tendher, wi sich skill,
Hoo makes it fair a pleasur to be ill ;
Mony a sufferer's felt his e'en groo weet
To find her watchin him i' th' lonesome neet,
Wi sich a look as angels weel met wear,
An' oft for God to bless her said a prayer.
Once hoo were ill wi fayver long an' dhree,
An' word were brought us hoo were beaun to dee ;
Aw ne'er yerd sich a tumult sin' aw're born
As th' weighvers made to think hoo'd done her yorn ;
Then when we'd betther news they gav a sheaut
'At made one thankful t' roof were middlin steaut,
An' welly shapped bwoth woles an' ears to crack
When, pale but weel again, th' dear lass coome back.
It's Martha 'at th' owd maisther's youngest lad
Wanted to wed, afore he went to th' bad ;
Aw used to see him bendin o'er her loom
Wi saycret whisper every time he coome ;
He were a lively, honsome chap, for sure,
Wi plump red cheeks an' shinin curly yure ;
Hoo met ha saved him, happen, iv hoo would,
He wanted firmness but his mind were good,
But that were noane to be. " Nowe, nowe ! " hoo said,
" Aw'm spokken for bi one 'at's long bin dyead ;
It's no use talkin ! iv yor fayther knew
Yo wanted me there'd be a rare to-do !
Yor ways are sthrange, aw couldn't live yor life,
An' aw've no larnin for a rich mon's wife ;
It's foolishness, so pray yo let it dhrop,
Whol aw con weighve i' th' shade aw'm beaun to stop."

" Listen, my dear," he'd say, " before you dash
My cup of bliss away with hand so rash ;
Your ignorance is nothing—there are schools,
And we can laugh at criticising fools ;
My father cannot stay us, he shall know
That for your sake I'll wealth and power forego ;
Without your love, to bless me and control,
I rush to ruin, body, brains, and soul !"
" Do hush ! " cries Martha. " That's wake childish talk,
Yo're owd enough neaw bi yorsel to walk ;
Surelee yo're noane so slamp 'at yo'll be lost
Becose a foolish lass yor fancy crossed ;
But be 't as 'twill, mi promise has bin passed,
An' mi first sweetheart's beaun to be mi last."

Yon long-necked weighver makes me laugh some oft,
A moore unsattl't fellah never coughed ;
For o t' long years he's wovven, he's ne'er sure
At th' week end iv he's comin ony moore ;
" Aw'm stowed o' weighvin ! " he keeps brastin eaut ;
" Aw'm i' th' wrong reed, there cawn't be hawve a deaubt ;
Above this job aw'm beaun to jump a step—
Who'll buy mi sithers, knife, or reedhook, chep ?
There met be nowt to do i' th' world but weighve,
To summat else aw'm beaun to set mi neighve ;
T' longer aw stop an' t' moore they han me fast ;
Aw'll oather loasen misel neaw or brast ! "
He olez comes again o' th' Monday mornin,
An' sattles, iv he's owt like dacent yorn in,
Whol th' pay day makes him chunther, an' once moore
Comes Sethurday to find him noane just sure ;
But iv his warps are bad he carries on
As iv there'd ne'er bin sich a ill-used mon ;
He's sure enough then 'at he's beaun to goo,
An' taks care to keep tellin us t' week through.
Aw axed him once, " What doesta want to be ? "
" Nay ! aw've nowt sattl't yet," he says, " we s' see ;
Aw'm noane particlar iv it's summat good ;
Say docthorin—aw've olez undherstood
Thoose chaps con addle fortins every week
Wi tuthri bottles an' a bit o' cheek."
" It's noane a very yezzy job," aw said ;
" Tha knows, they'll come an' rugg thee eaut o' bed
At every heaur o'th' neet, an' nobbut pay
Thi bills at Midsummer an' Kesmas Day ;

Slamp, limp. *Chunther*, grumble.

Beside, tha'll ha to slat i' blood, an' chop
Bad arms an' legs off in a dhreadful crop."
"Howd hard!" he says, "that'll do noane for me;
Aw sleep some seaundly when aw've bin on th' spree;
Aw'd clen forgetten o'er that carvin thrick—
Why, iv mi nose bleeds, mon, it turns me sick!
An' as for six month paydays, at that bat
Aw'd betther stick to th' job aw'm wortchin at;
Aw darsay, lookin weel at things o reaund,
A turney's job's abeaut th' most safe an' seaund."
"That's it!" aw towd him. "Into th' garrets climb,
An' study law books up to th' edge o' time,
Then pay a hundherd peaund to get i'th' class,
An' there'll be nowt to stop thee makin brass."
"Why, hang it, mon!" he says, "aw'd liefer be
A bobby nor keep messin here, dost see?
Neaw that's bwoth leet an' ornimental wark;
They'n nobbut to thry t' windows afther dark,
Walk reaund majestic undher t' warmin sun,
Two days off duty an' another on,
Ston i' th' police court yerin cases thried—
They'n ne'er to lift a hond for nowt beside.
Th' helmets are useful to hud oddments in,
An' t' thruncheon makes a hondy rowlin-pin,
Th' whistle an' lanthron's just what t' childher like
To play wi; so what saysta? Mun aw sthrike?"
"Just plez thisel," aw towd him; "there's no deaubt
A Roman helmet sets a fellah eaut,
Though iv they copied classic models reet
They'd want short frocks, bare legs, an' clog-shod feet.
Tha wain't object to gettin punced sometimes,
When tacklin big sthrong fellahs for their crimes;
Through mizzlin rain for heaurs tha'll ha to ston,
But that wain't olez kill a healthy mon;
An' iv o' th' fire brigade tha gets a lick
Tha'll look for bein kilt or roasted wick."
He whistl't, skenned, an' thought he wouldn't cob
His time away on sich a risky job,
So aw advis't him to goo into thripe
As bein t' best gam gooin brass to slype,
For they could oather sell eaut iv it paid,
Or swallow th' levins o' their stock-i'-thrade.
He'd bother noane, he thought; aw thought so too,
An' could ha towd him summat he ne'er knew,
For nowt's so sure as he'll to weighvin howd
Whol fro owd Dyeath he catches his last cowd.

Slype, to gather in heaps like grass cut by a scythe.

Yon's Abel Priestley an' his sisther Jane,
Young offshoots ov a good owd Rachda sthrain;
Iv o these folk i' th' borough larn't their ways
There'd be a sattlement i' tuthri days.
They're olez cheerful, sociable, an' kind,
No selfishness finds harbour i' their mind;
T' lad never keeps his sisther runnin reaund
To do his arrands, whol he stons his greaund,
An' merry Jane, though ov her joke some fond,
Ne'er thinks o' plaguin ony folk i' th' lond.
Young Abel's beaun to be a science mon,
He taks moore things nor weighvin in his spon;
He studies engineerin, an' at sums
Con ston his corner again owt 'at comes;
He'll tarry noane i' th' shade—his road slants breet
An' wide afore his steady-risin feet.
Jane's no particlar points o' good or ill,
Hoo just keeps ploddin quietly at th' mill;
Though labbour fills her life wi tedious reaund
Her merry heart ne'er feels th' chen's canker't weaund;
Hoo's noane a beauty, but her smile's so breet
It flashes deawn th' long alleys like a leet.
There's ne'er no fratchin between minds so thrue,
Their joy an' sorrow's olez hawved bi two;
Like sweethearts they gwone walkin bi theirsel,
Keepin no saycrets back 'at words con tell.
Ah! it's a pity we con seldom see
Brothers an' sisthers i' sich harmony.

Silas, weel-loved owd friend! afore aw stop,
Last i' th' procession tha mun have a shop;
'Twere no use axin thee to ston at th' front,
Or thry to squeeze thisel fur up i' th' hunt,
Too weel aw know tha wortches bi th' Owd Book,
Makin for t' lowest cheer or th' hindmost nook;
So neaw cob off thi bashfulness—tha'rt fast,
An' beaun to get thi picther ta'en at last.
Knock off thi looms a minute, turn this road
Thi mild blue e'en o'erhung bi foryead brode,
Put back thi long white yure, as snod as silk,
An' show thi cheeks, like roses dipped i' milk,
Rear up thi long thin figure i' full view—
Aw'll say no word abeaut thee but what's thrue.
Eh, lad! aw recollect thee smart an' young,
Chęted bi Harriet's deceivin tongue;
Hoo nobbut played at cwortin thee, for fun,
Though t' joke were bitther for thee when hoo'd done;

Hoo's wished some oft hoo'd takken thee, aw'll bet,
Yon dhrunken husband's fairly made her sweat.
Thrown o'er bi her tha shrunk away fro th' leet,
An' started wandherin i' t' depth o' neet,
Oft stoppin eaut whol th' sun again had come,
Takkin thi facthry-wark on th' journey wom.
Tha brings some bonny maks o' stuff to th' shade—
Grubs, loaches, mice, an' sich quare stock-i'-thrade,
Chattherin mony a heaur wi pride an' glee
O'er findin some rare leause or buttherflee;
At throstle tamin aw ne'er fund thi match,
O winged an' four-legged craythers tha con catch,
Ne'er thinkin twice at riskin life an' limb
To gether brid eggs or deep lodges swim.
Tha looks a pratty seet sometimes, owd mon,
When thrailin back fro starlet carryins on
I' wood an' fielt; thi pockets crommed wi stuff
Gether't wi care fro mony a broo an' clough,
Plants reaund thi neck an' on thi jacket lap,
A neest o' buzzarts shoved inside thi cap,
A weasel, frog, or cheepin brid i' hond,
A bag o' thrash fro brook an' meadow-lond
Slung on thi back, thi face scrat middlin weel,
Plaisther't wi weet an' dirt fro creawn to heel.
Tha felt some preaud when th' chap fro Lunnon coome,
An' set thee sortin dogberry an' broom,
Givin thi stuffed collections praise so keen,
An' writin o'er thee in his magazine;
Heaw capped they were, thoose genthry greight an' rich,
To think a weighver should ha done so mich,
An' find tha'd sooner independent stop
Nor tak fro them a charitable shop!
Ah, lad! they never knew tha'd made a start
Nathuralisin through a brokken heart.
Young childher used to sheaut thee up an' deawn
To see thee cuttin sich quare freaks i' th' teawn,
But neaw to do thi pleasur there's a race,
So weel they love thi gentle, kindly face;
Bi groon-up folk tha'rt hee respected, too,
There's noane so mony neaw to co thee foo;
Not everybody undherstonds thi style,
There's olez tuthri cliverdicks to smile
At owt they thinken rayther eaut-o'th'-road,
But when they'n grinned an' chuckl't whol they're stowed
They'll think abeaut thi curious habits less,
An' find thi deep-hud springs o' tendherness.

Live on thi innicent an' simple life,
O livin things thi childher, th' world thi wife,
Thi modest spirit hutched up in it shell
Whol stirred bi pity to forget itsel,
Contented thrailin on thi lonely reaund,
Findin rich stores i' every foot o' greaund,
Quiet an' steady ploddin at thi wark,
Thi sun just risin abeaut th' edge o' dark,
Regarded, honoured, harmless as a dove,
Whol th' startin-bell rings for thee up above;
Tha'll feel thisel awom on th' heavenly clod,
So long through o His works tha's worshipped God.

Well! long enough, wi likenesses an' chat,
Aw could ratch eaut this cut aw'm weighvin at;
But, as it's narrow width an noane o'er-copped,
I' rezonable length it should be stopped.
Aw've said enough to show what weighvers are,
An' twelvemonth scrattin connot bring us nar;
Aw've shown yo middlin plain, shuz heaw it be,
'At we're like other folk fro low to hee—
Made o' th' same stuff, i' th' same quare fashion mixed,
Wi minds an' hopes on t' same adventhurs fixed.
We're o alike! it's noane a bit o' use
Yo tellin me 'at brass con gild a goose,
Or to hee-breedin we should cringe an' squirm;
Sich talk as that con never carry berm.
Rich idleness mun bring consait, we know;
Hard-wortchin poverty mun envy show;
But deep below that crust t' same nathur lies,
An' some day, happen, we may see it rise,
When things are on a level footin set,
An' there's an end to us, an' th' world, an' th' fret.

CHATTHERIN TIMBER.

There's some owd oak furnithur i' th' "Red Lion" at Littlebro' an' among it a grand carved cubbort, or scrutore or what yo'n a mind to co it, eight foot hee bi four wide, two feet fro front to back, wi two sets o' double durs, an' o maks o' fancy designs cut on th' panels—o th' lot built o' solid rich-colour't Lancashire oak, lookin as iv it 'd weather't a theausan storms an' were noane particlar to an odd theausan or two moore. Sthraight up an' deawn it stons, square-planted, carless o' time's tooth an' th' breighkin surf o' generations—*adscriptus glebæ*—rooted to th' clod firm as when it stood a livin teawer o' sthrength an' beauty in it native forest. Aw'd oft sin this fine piece o' wark, wondherin an' admirin; an' one neet as aw happen't to sit near it waitin for a thrain wom, o bi mysel, aw turn't toard t' thing an' axed,

"Heaw owd arta, aw should like to know?"

There were a faint, wheezy seaund, like an owd asthmatical chap thryin to cough, an' then a muffl't voice seaunded fro th' cubbort, sayin, "Two hunduth year, welly."

"An' i' good fettle yet?" aw said. "Tha'rt a gradely Methuselah among cubborts. But tha seaunds a bit reausty. Come, aw'll oppen this top dur a bit, an' then aw s' yer thee betther."

"Tha'd be reausty, young chap, iv tha'd stood here as long as me beaut ever bendin thi back, to say naught o' bein welly chawked wi dust when th' sarvants sweepen up—a murrain on 'em!"

"Just thee keep a civil tongue o' thi shelf," aw said. "Aw'll talk noane wi noather cubborts nor tables 'at cawn't be summat like dacent."

"Nay! don't goo yet," it co'd eaut, a bit excited. "Tha'rt t' first chap aw've spokken to for mony a year. Aw geet weary o' talkin long sin', for most o' th' ears 'at com'n in here con yer nowt. Let's have a bit ov a crack, an' aw'll thry to keep off sthrong language as weel as aw con. Tha mun alleaw a bit for mi bringin up, tha knows; there were a dyel o' bad talk when aw first coome eaut i' society."

"Is that so?" aw said. "Why, o th' good folk keepen tellin us 'at we ne'er were so bad as we are neaw."

"Thee tak no notice on 'em: it's me 'at knows. Where there's one curse neaw there used to be ten, an' a gill ov ale satisfies a chap to-day where his greight-gronfayther ud ha wanted hawve-a-gallon. Eh, mon! aw could tell some tales iv aw'd a mind."

"Well, get forrad," aw said. "Aw'll wait for t' next thrain iv tha's owt to say woth hearkenin. It's doin thee good to chat a bit: tha seaunds a dyel clearer oready."

"Aw dun' know whether my owd-fashion't talk 'll intherest a young lad like thee or not. But tha happen thinks thysel middlin owd becose tha's getten a grey yead."

"Aw've bin younger i' mi time, shuzheaw; but aw'm noane swaggerin, undherstond. We con nobbut leet where we're cobbed."

"Swaggerin!" says th' cubbort, makin a sluttherin seaund as iv thryin to laugh, an' blowin a bit ov eddycrop web off th' top shelf. "Tha's summat to swagger o'er!"

"Tha'rt a bit consaited, aw yer, like most owd folk; but think on tha'rt nobbut a wood-yead, an' con ne'er be nowt else. Aw'll sit noane here to be laughed at bi a cubbort, so give o'er witha. Let's yer where tha coome fro, an' who made thee."

"Well, aw'll thry. It'll be a long tale, so tha'd betther co for another gill afore aw gate. Aw don't want to be brokken off i' th' middle; for aw deaubt mi memory's getten a bit touched this last tuthri year."

"Tha'll happen pay for a saup."

"Tha's spokken too lat. Aw've had hundherds o' guineas hud away i' mi saycret dhrawers for scores o' years at a time, but there's nowt left—not a creawn-piece. Aw'm raythor mad abeaut it; for aw'd sanner be thought stupid nor greedy, same as most British oak-lumps."

"Ne'er mind," aw said; "it's nobbut a three-hawpny job. Tha wain't have a saup thysel, happen? Aw see no signs ov a throttle abeaut thee, but iv it'll be ony satisfaction to set a potful on one o' thi shelves aw'll do it."

"Nowe; ne'er bother," it said. "Tha may set th' dur hawve-an-inch fur oppen, so 'at aw con get mi wynt betther, an' then aw s' be reet enough."

Aw seed to th' bits ov arrangements it mention't, an' sattl't deawn to yer what it had to tell.

"Mi recollection gwoes back welly three hunduth year, but there's no need to start at th' beginnin. Aw grew up a sthraight, honsome young saplin, among a creawd moore, mostly owdher nor mysel. Fifty year we stood through o maks o' weather, an' bi that time aw'd getten to be reckon't among th' owd uns, for there were olez plenty comin up. Forty year moore an' aw were one o' th' kings o' th' wood. Most o' th' owdher end were failin or dyead by one mishap or another, but there were no failins abeaut me. Preaud an' full o' life aw rear't mi tall, thick column, spread eaut mi green banners, dhrove mi taugh suckers deep into th' root-crommed greaund; an' no shaft o' timber i' that plantin could brag o'er me. We stood just aboon Belfield—or th' Beal-fielt as

we co'd it then, afther t' windin river 'at ran wandherin across t' meadow, in an' eaut o' th' wood, toard th' silvery Roch.

One day two chaps coome fro Littlebro' here, across moor an' bog, howt an' howm, pikin their road among th' timber whol they coome to me.

'This 'll do,' one on 'em says; so he off wi his jerkin an cap, showin a brode foryead an' arms full o' muscle, an' fot me a cleaut wi a sharp axe 'at made me hutch. Then t'other chap gated penkin at mi ribs on t'other side, an' between 'em they soon brought me thundherin deawn. It took 'em mony a day to get me carted deawn onto this clod, for circular saws hadn't bin thought on then; but they shapped it at last, geet me split into planks, an' laid me by awhile in a croft at Windybonk. When aw'd bin lyin theere tuthri month him 'at 'd hit me first coome again, looked at a plank or two, an' were so takken up wi mi fine grain 'at he swore,

'As sure as my name's Crab Scwofilt aw'll cut sich a cabinet eaut o' thee as ne'er were sin. It shall be fit for kings to look at; an' long afther aw've bin planted an' com'n up turmits folk shall see it wi wondher, and say, "That's Scwofilt wark; they thought he were nobbut a cartmendher, but heaw neaw?"'

Crab were no idle braggart. He'd some brains at t' back o' that big foryead ov his, an' he put o his heart into th' wark, as onybody may see yet bi lookin at me. Aw were like a hobby for him to potther at when his gradely wark were o'er, an' he played wi me every neet through a whol summer an winther, never stowin ov his job. His wife used to bring her knittin an' pyerch i' th' window-bottom, where hoo could look deawn th' valley toard th' settin sun, an' watch o 'at stirred; whol their childher laughed an' danced abeaut as iv life were a good joke, plezin their mother an' makin their fayther's yead warch, as he studied o'er his plans or chisell't at his carvin.

'Do be quiet, childher,' he'd co eaut. 'They mun ha getten their noisy nathur fro thee, Mally. Aw were olez a quiet lad mysel.'

'Tha were that!' his wife said. 'Iv there'd bin a tuthri moore as quiet nobody could ha lived abeaut here for yo. Tha'd three hunduth an' sixty-five mischief neets a year.'

'Nay! aw shapped to spare one or two for cwortin, aw think. Dost remember me singin this song undher thi chamber window?

Aw'm thinkin on thee day an' neet,
Whol aw con hardly keep mi feet;
Oh! tha'rt a blossom fair an' sweet,
My Mally!

At bull bait, foumart hunt, or race,
Aw olez used to have a place;
Neaw aw con nobbut see thy face,
My Mally!

There were a lot moore on't, but aw've forgetten it neaw. Dost recollect?'

'Aw recollect thee makin a greight din an' scrapin a fiddle, when tha'd ha bin betther i' bed.'

'Makin a din!' Crab grunted, gettin up to sthretch his joints an' spreadin his arms wi a wide gape. 'It were sweet enough i' thi ears then, let me tell thee. Aw should have had a lute to be i' th' fashion, but th' owd fiddle did very weel considherin. T' worst on't were aw geet a cowd i' mi yead wi th' job, an' there's noane mich romance abeaut a chap whol he's a runnin nose.'

'Sarve thee reet!' Mally said, laughin; an' he lifted her in his sthrong arms, gav her a buss, an' dhropped her into th' window bottom again.

'Tha cares nowt who sees thi carryins on,' hoo says, wipin her meauth on her brat. 'Yon's th' owd cake-brade baker comin up. He's sin us!'

'Let him!' says Crab, givin her another buss, marlockin wi his childher a bit—tossin 'em up, reckonin to shut 'em i' my cubborts, an' what not—an' then bucklin to his wark again.

But Mrs. Scwofilt geet weary o' th' job afore it were finish't, for when he coome toard th' end, an' could see th' full beauty ov his wark, Crab could hardly lev me neet or day. There were no gettin him to bed, an' sometimes his wife couldn't edge a word eaut on him, he were so lapped up in his studyin.

'Aw'll be gooin to bed, Crab,' hoo'd say, toard ten o' t' clock. 'Dunnot be long.'

'Well,' Crab ud say, beaut lookin reaund.

'Mind thi candle fro swailin, or tha'll set th' rushes in a blaze; an' be sure tha tees yon dur fast. Tha wain't be long, neaw? An' think on to put some turf on th' fire to-neet.'

'Well,' he'd say again.

'An' keep thi shavins eaut o' th' porritch pon. Aw ne'er bargain't for eightin chips iv aw wed a joiner. Tak t' chen off th' bull-dog, an' think on to bring thi gun upstairs wi thee. Aw'll swear there were summat wick i' th' butthery last neet. An' dunnot be long neaw.'

Hoo'd get hersel sided off at last, an' afther a while, when hoo'd sheauted deawnstairs at him tuthri times, he'd follow, forgettin o th' jobs hoo'd set him. But one neet hoo fell asleep, weary o' co'in on him, wakkenin up to find him noane com'n an' th' grey mornin peepin through t' window slits, so hoo put some clooas on an' went a seechin him. Crab were deawn o' one knee lookin hard at me, mallet an' chisel i' hond, candle guttherin to th' wood socket, an' th' fire clen eaut.

'Whatever's to do, my lad?' hoo axed him, wondherin iv his yead were turn't.

'Nowt, Mally,' he said, jumpin up an' cobbin his tools away. 'O's done at last! Look as aw will there's noather point nor nook to be fund 'at aw con awther. It's finish't!'

'Come to bed, do,' Mally said. 'Aw wondher tha hasn't fo'n asleep o'er it bi neaw.'

'Bed be hanged!' Crab co'd eaut. 'What's a neet's sleep to a chap 'at's just finished a grand, solid bit o' wark like this? Fot me a quart ov ale an' th' hamshank; aw'll ha mi breakfast. Tha should feel preaud o' havin sich a husbant as me;' an' he gav her a seaundin buss an' a squeeze.

'Well, happen aw do,' Mally laughed, sluttherin off for summat t' eight.

Scwofilt ne'r parted wi me whol he lived. Scores o' greight folk co'd at th' Windybonk to see me, an' offer't Crab yeps o' brass iv he'd nobbut sell; but he'd have his own road, an' olez towd 'em he'd as soon think o' sellin one o' th' childher. Some young prout up i' Whittaker an' Cleggswood made it up to steighl me one neet; but Crab geet a side wind on it, loden't a batther't owd blunderbox 'at his fayther had swapped three beeas for, an' when he yerd t' thieves comin took aim deawn th' brooside an' swept it as clen as a bucketful o' gravel an' welly hawve a peaund o' peawdher met be expected to do, beside puttin his shooldher-knockle eaut o' joint an' o but shakin th' heause deawn. That gang coome no moore shuzheaw.

II.

Thoose were stirrin days. Fourteen year afore Crab geet me finished th' Habeas Corpus Act were made law, an' that upset at one smack th' good owd plan o' crommin folk into prison just becose they happen't to be i' somebry's road. Raleigh had twelve year o' that lonely job; but it ne'er hurt Walther mich, for he were a chap in a theausan. Th' Queen o' Scots geet nineteen year for her share, wi th' rheumatics cobbed in, for th' crime o' bein akin to Lizabeth. It were hee time to stop that gam, an' th' Habeas Corpus did it wi a wap; pavin a road for th' glorious system we han neaw, when a chap's soon towd whether it's five shillin an' costs or a free sarmon fro th' cheerman."

"Give o'er wi thee, vinegar chops!" aw said, "afore tha turns th' ale seaur. Onybody met think tha'd bin run in fuddl't an disordherly thysel."

"Nay; aw've olez bin steady. Ah! thoose were wick times, lad. Whigs an' Tories were first yerd on just abeaut then—they'd bin Reauntyeads an' Cavaliers afore—an' iv there hasn't bin enough yerd on 'em sin' it's a pity. Th' politics aw've to ston hearkenin ud weary a twod. Then there were o t' religious bother

Yeps, heaps.

gooin on i' Scotlan, where theausans o' folk were tickl't wi thumb-screws, sworts, pistils, noosed bant, an' sichlike, becose they wanted to say their prayers i' their own road astid o' doin as they were towd, never carin heaw mich throuble they gav th' bishops, an' wortchin th' poor sodiers to t' dyeath. Th' Rye Heause plot made a dyel o' talk, too, an' a bit o' wark for th' hangsman ; an' then King Charley deed, wi nobry but a dog or two to fret o'er him, an' his brother Jim geet th' shop. Young Monmouth, one o' th' rook o' Charley's chance childher, hanker't afther t' creawn, an' welly geet it, beside. It were a toss up at Sedgmoor, an' aw've oft turn't o'er i' mi wood-yead what 'd have happen't iv Monmouth had won. There'd ha bin some curious puzzles to dyel wi then, wouldn't there? Ha'ever, he lost, an' sly Jimmy chopped his yead off, an' that seem't to quieten him. He were a honsome, bowd, oppen, sthraightforrad lad, iv he were a love-chilt, an' everybody liked him—obbut Jimmy.

That duleskin ov a Judge Jeffreys were agate ov his marlocks at that time—busy teemin a river o' blood o deawn th' west counthry ; lyin, cursin, murdherin, stickin at nowt to spread justice an' help on religion. Sly Jimmy backed him up, chucklin in his wide sleeve, an' thinkin they were doin greight sthrokes between 'em. Aw wondher what he thought four year afther, livin upo charity i' France, when he'd cheted eaut ov his own counthry i' th' dark, fleyed 'at his subjects had getten so fond on him 'at they'd want his yead for a dobber. An' what thought t' butcherin judge when they rove him eaut o' th' aleheause coalhole where he'd hud hissel, an' marched him to th' Teawer wi' a theausan tongues clattherin at his ears, an' ten theausan fingers itchin to rip his flesh into ribbins? Sam Butler had deed nine year afore that, takkin one o' th' keenest wits i' England wi him, or he met happen have had a word or two to say abeaut th' job. Another talkative chap had gwone just afore th' king bowted—a rough ramblin tinker 'at Jim had locked up once for preighchin. That turn't eaut to be th' best bit o' wark Jimmy ever did, for th' tinker gated waggin a pen when they stopped him fro waggin his tongue, an' scrat deawn some writin 'at fro what aw yer shaps like bein here when th' king, an' th' judge, an' o sich like o'erlookers an' foremen ov an heaur are nowt but names in a printed list. Jack Bunyan they co'd him, an' a dyel o' folk thought he'd a slate off.

Ah! they were busy days, thoose. Things did sattle a bit when William gated gafferin ; though it wern't o smooth. There were that Boyne wayther job, tha knows, an' th' Glencoe murdher ——"

"Aw'm soory to stop thee," aw put in, "but iv we're beaun to have o th' English histhory for two hundherd year back we mun have a full day to it. Beside, there's plenty o' that mak o' news i' schoo books."

"Aw wain't say another word," th' cubbort snapped. "Pest on't! tha'rt as bad as ony on 'em. Aw've bin talkin, just to plez thee, whol aw feel as rough as sondpapper, an' tha shuts me up this road!"

"Dunnot get so reausty i' th' hinges," aw said, "an' stop that swearin. Let's yer some moore abeaut Scwofilt, or some mak o' common folk, an' let th' kings an' queens a-be. Tha mun ha sin an' yerd a dyel o' things i' thi long life—good, bad, an' t'other sort. There's mony a play bin acted at t' front o' thee, aw know, wi bwoth dirty thricks an' fine actions in it; tha's known tears to rain an' yerd th' wynt o' laughther blow. What's moore, tha'll ha' yerd folk talk to theirsel, an' that's th' time to read a mind; for a chap never starts that gam beaut findin stuff on his tongue 'at caps him as mich as onybody else. Tha should be a philosopher, wi o t' human nathur tha's com'n across, but tha hardly favvours it, loisin thi temper for nowt."

"Look o'er it this time, an' it shannot happen again. Aw'm owd enough to keep mi temper, it's thrue; but there's tuthri knots i' mi timber 'at will keep givin me a twinge neaw an' again. Aw s' ne'er get o'er it. Aw were groon so."

"Aw'll forgive thee this once," aw said; "specially afther sich a honsome apology. Here's good health an' long life to thee. Aw hope tha'll last as long as th' owd tinker's book."

"Nay! Aw s' come to th' worms when mi time's up, same as o on yo. Well, aw hardly know what to tell thee, 'at 'll plez. It's a tough job sortin eaut th' recollections ov a life like mine."

"Will it help thee iv aw scrat thi yead a bit? It's oft a greight relief to me when aw've mi studyin cap on."

"Nowe. Mi skin's too thick. Mun aw tell thee a tale abeaut a will 'at were hud away once i' mi inside; an' abeaut a young chap 'at were badly used, but never grumbl't, an' wouldn't revenge hissel when he geet a good chance?"

"Is that chap dyead?"

"Long sin'."

"It sthruck me aw'd ne'er let on him."

"There were sich a mon, whether tha laughs or not. Mun aw tell thee abeaut him?"

"Bi o myens. Aw'll walk wom raythor nor miss yerin ov a chap o' that mak, so get on wi thi sawin."

"It were i' this shap, dost see. Aw belonged once to owd Josha Thruebonk at Leetowlers—aboon a hunduth year back. Josh dee'd, levin two lads 'at ne'er could agree wi one another: Philip, twenty-five year owd, black-yured, slendher, quiet, an' thoughtful; an' Roger, two year younger, breet, fair, rosy, wakken as a cricket.

Black Philip had bin no favouryte wi his faythor, nor wi onybody else mich; for he were too shy an' close to push hissel forrad,

an' olez kept his meauth shut iv he'd nowt to talk abeaut woth yerin. Roger were t' family pet; bangin reaund like six feet o' sunshine, his tongue for ever waggin wi o maks o' leet nonsense, his honsome face dhrawin everybody to it as a thraycle-daubed papper fots flees.

Just afore th' owd chap fell into his last illness he sent for his owdest lad into th' library, where he kept me, an said,

'Philip, you will be master here when I am gone. Whether you will fill the place with credit or not remains to be seen. I fear me you have not the spirit of a real Truebank.'

'I am as you and God have made me.'

'No doubt, boy; but the question is, have you fitting pride for the holder of this large estate. If it had been Roger——'

'As you will, sir. Don't let me interfere with my brother's prospects.'

'I would fain have you curb that biting tongue, Philip. Can you then so easily throw away your inheritance, with all its privileges of wealth and power, and content yourself with a younger son's portion?'

'Either position will content me. If I am to rule after you my government shall be just; if not—well, in that case there will be no need to assume over other men a superiority that does not exist.'

'You are a strange boy,' says Josha, shakin his yead. 'Fearfully advanced in your ideas. Take heed to your rent-roll, think of your exalted rank, and drop these wild doctrines. What is your quarrel with Roger?'

'I have none.'

'He accuses you of being chief culprit in your ceaseless squabbles.'

'Then, I suppose, it must be true. Perhaps my quarrelsome vein may serve me well in regulating the estate.'

'Don't be so unreasonable with your brother. He is younger than you, remember, and has no such high position before him. Be considerate towards the lad, and try to imitate his frank, cordial manner, and appreciate his warm, generous heart.'

'I will so endeavour, sir. The young man shall be considered, and the light of reason shall be applied to him.'

'Ah! cold-hearted and full of shallow scorn, as usual. I do well to talk reasonably with you. Call somebody to help me to bed.'

His mon carted him upstairs, levin Philip bi hissel to grunt an' march abeaut awhile.

'How is it that my father will persist in fitting wrong meanings and intentions upon all my statements? Heartless and scornful! A decent character, surely. Roger seriously held up as a model worthy of my imitation! *Satis superque!* Come, let us see what

the new Scotch poet has to say, and forget this whirling frenzy of existence for an hour.'

He sit him deawn to read Burns, but didn't get th' heaur he wanted, for i' tuthri minutes his brother coome bangin into th' reawm, lookin middlin black, cobbed hissel into a cheer, an' gated gabblin curses to hissel as fast as his tongue could wag.

'Is this the amiable young man I am desired to copy?' Philip thought. 'Truly, you must hold me excused, my father.' He looked o'er his book wi a pityin sort ov a smile 'at made t'other wur mad nor ever.

'Plague on your gipsy face, bookworm!' Roger snarled. 'Would you mock me?'

'Not without good cause, brother,' says Philip, as cool an' quiet as t'other were flushed an' wot. 'Can this be the ideal Truebank of whom I hear so much—the amiable, the jocular, the good-natured? Assume your company face and manners, good Roger; I love not to see your true nature so indiscreetly exposed.'

'Curse your sarcasm!' sheauted Roger, rippin his swort eaut an' flyin at him like a madman. Philip wapped his own swort off th' table, ne'er botherin to poo th' scabbart off, an' were ready for him when he londed; an' slash or poke as he met th' young un could do nowt moore dangerous nor grindin his teeth an' stampin.

'Peace, good brother!' Philip said, when t'other geet weary o' pokin at him. 'Rest, perturbed spirit! Is this sudden fury accounted for by the fact that you have been gambling again, and losing as usual?'

'Curse you!' sheauted Roger, fair sluttherin wi temper.

'So you remarked before—and quite unnecessarily. Have we finished this exercise?'

Roger turn't away, lookin like havin a fit, an' just then a sarvant coome to bring their fayther's compliments, an' beg Mister Philip not to make ony further disturbance. That made t' brothers bwoth brast eaut laughin, an' Roger looked sham't ov hissel when he'd done.

'Forgive my unlucky temper, Phil. I have been cursedly hard hit at piquet.'

'So! my prophetic soul! How much this time, will you allow me to ask?'

'A beggarly hundred or so. Nothing if my allowance were what it ought to be, or if with my usual luck I had not been a younger son.'

'You have my sympathy, Roger. At the same time, being a younger son by grievous prior birth of my superfluous and stupidly obstructive self, are you justified in scattering money as you do?'

'Pish! all that will settle itself. I must marry Lucy Grange; she is rich enough in all conscience.'

'Previously—merely as a matter of form—persuading her to consent?'

Roger laughed an' looked very knowin. 'She is infatuated with me, and only waits to be invited.'

'If she were acquainted with all I could tell her perhaps her thoughts might change.'

'Egad! they might!' Roger said, lookin freeten't for a minute. 'But fortunately you are the last man in the world to betray secrets. You scrupulously honourable gentry are convenient in that point at least.'

'And useful if a man wishes to spread lies concerning us?'

'Very, very!' Roger chuckl't, swaggerin off t' best side eaut again.

'Another dream gone,' Philip said, talkin to hissel. 'Can she indeed love that shallow coxcomb, who makes no effort to disguise the fact that he seeks her wealth chiefly? Love him? Why, yes; assuredly. How could she resist so much red and white, so gay a rattlepate, so experienced a charmer? 'Tis not in reason. If she is for him decidedly she cannot be for me. That must be looked to. I will bring my lady to the test, win or lose, and determine whether my future is to be happy or miserable, valuable or worthless. Till then sit still my soul.'

III.

Philip were noane long wi satisfyin hissel abeaut t' state o' Lucy's mind. He were determin't enough when he'd ony job i' hond 'at he thought woth doin; olez settin abeaut his wark in a sthraightforard style, makin no fuss, but gettin bits o' business done very oft whol other folk would ha bin thinkin heaw they were to start.

Whether he axed her plump eaut, or sattl't it wi Roger, or what, aw never knew; but he coome i' th' library one day lookin very deawn i' t' meauth, shut hissel in, an' read eaut some verses.

TO LUCY.

Scant offering of a faithful heart,
A lover writes this simple lay,
And dedicates it as a part
Of all the debt he hopes to pay;
For what in him is worth receiving
To Lucy he would fain be giving.

Fly, wingéd song, and wrap my love
In soft enchantment by thy note;
Sing to her like the enamelled dove,
That woos the spring with fluty throat:
With music's voice the truth deliver
That I am Lucy's slave for ever.

Not all Euterpe's sweetest tones
  Could speak the depth of my sweet woe;
List, maiden, to thy lover's moans,
  Nor let him all despairing go:
Till for my stars thine eyes are lighted,
I walk the earth as one benighted.

Around me a faint splendour glows,
  As when the moon, itself unseen,
Through veiling mist the outline shows
  Of steely brook and upland green:
And so the face for which I'm sighing
May hidden pass, with sunrise flying.

'Tis true the day brings added light,
  But not the light of Lucy's eye;
And he who lives but in her sight
  In other beam must surely die;
Or, living, with false brightness cover
The inward gloom of a lost lover.

Ye heavens! be witness of my truth!
  Picture my steadfast heart! oh sea!
And, Lucy, pity thou the youth
  Who sees in all the world but thee!
His fond devotion hold for merit,
With constant radiance fill his spirit.

'Quite a classic,' Philip mutther't when he'd finished. 'A pity that so much ardent passion and so many flowing iambics should be wasted.' He crushed th' papper in his hond, threw up his reet arm, an' broke eaut,

'Lord! Thou madest me to wear a sensitive nature under a cold-looking face! Was it just? Must it be ever my lot to writhe in secret torture, while coarser and more selfish men have the priceless gifts of friendship and love? Shall I never find one sympathetic heart to share my thoughts, one tender bosom to beat against my own? Thou knowest, Lord, all my desires; my soul is not hid from Thee!'

He stood a while, thremblin, an' then quieten't deawn. '*Retro Sathanas!* Let me not lose command of myself if all else is lost. As for thee, foolish song, thy mission is past. I pondered over thee in secret while a readier suitor spoke boldly and won the prize.' So he ripped his verses up an' brunt 'em.

Tha'll see fro o this heaw things stood wi these lads when their fayther dee'd. Th' owd chap went off sudden at th' finish, sayin nowt no moore abeaut his property, an' nobry 'd ever yerd ov a will bein made. Everybody felt sure 'at Philip were th' comin mon, but everybody were cheted for once; for when th' buryin were o'er t' family lawyer read a papper 'at he'd fund i' one o' my cubborts, givin th' estates to 'my well-beloved son Roger,' an' to 'my elder son' two hundherd peaund a year.

'This document is quite irregular,' t' lawyer said to Philip. 'You will contest it, of course.'

'Certainly not,' Philip towd him, very sharp an' short.

'My *dear* sir! You will never allow so fine a property to slip from your hands. This paper is not witnessed, and cannot stand in law.'

'Do you doubt that these lines show my father's wishes? Shall I, by a legal quibble, confiscate goods not meant to be mine?'

'Nobody could think the worse of you for that. In fact, you will be generally set down as foolish or mad if you neglect to seize the estate.'

'Silence, sir!' Philip said, in a fashion nobry ever yerd fro him afore. 'Because your mean soul is incapable of realising abstract virtue—but I beg your pardon. I have no right to dictate to you.'

So Roger geet o th' property, an' Philip were just as satisfied wi his two hundherd a year as iv it 'd bin twenty. But he were noane satisfied abeaut loisin Lucy. He made his mind up 'at when Roger wed her they'd want him no longer moidherin reaund th' heause; so he geet ready to flit across th' say, eaut o' th' gate.

A day or two afore th' weddin he were rootin abeaut lookin for a silver snuffbox ov his fayther's, thinkin to tak it wi him for a keepsake, but there were no findin t' thing, an' nobry could tell him owt abeaut it. When he'd seeched everywheere else he coome muttherin to me, wondherin iv there were ony saycret dhrawers i' mi inside, an' studyin heaw to find 'em. He fund one, too, afther a bit, but there were no snuffbox in it, nor owt else, nobbut a sheet o' stiff papper cover't wi writin. Philip read it o'er, an' fund it to be a will levin th' property to him an' four hundherd a year to Roger; dated a week afore his fayther dee'd, an' sign't bi two o' th' sarvants as witnesses.

'They would sign the paper without knowing what it was, most likely,' t' young chap said to hissel. 'That may account for their silence. Well, now, if my father wrote this will he certainly had no hand in the other. If he did not write that other Roger must have done so himself. If Roger wrote it he is guilty of forgery. The punishment of forgery is death. By his death Lucy would be set free, and in all probability would marry me sooner or later. But she would suffer bitterly, for she unquestionably loves that smiling rascal. So, on the one hand, it is my duty to claim this estate, and take my rightful place; on the other stands the fact that by doing so I doom my brother to the gallows, and inflict lasting pangs upon a woman for whose happiness I would cheerfully forfeit life. Shall I play hearts or trumps?'

Whol he stood wondherin th' dur oppen't, an' Roger an' Lucy coome in, chattherin an' laughin together like childher.

'What a beauteous youth he is,' Philip grunted, slippin th' will into his pocket. 'Who could refuse so fascinating a lover?'

Th' sweethearts talked to him abeaut his journey an' his prospects, Roger thinkin he met do very weel in America, wi care, an'

Lucy advisin him to think abeaut gettin wed as soon as he could shap, for single fellahs ne'er did no good; whol black Philip grinned through his teeth, talked off his tongue end, an' thought heaw he could make 'em beaunce iv he'd a mind.

'If I decide to establish a business in America I may have to ask you for some capital, Roger,' says Philip. 'May I reckon on you for a thousand pounds or so?'

'Most certainly, brother, if I can possibly spare the money. The expenses of my estate here will be very large.'

Philip very like thought he could soon lessen 'em for him iv he'd a mind, but nobbut said,

'Hardly so large as your rent roll, probably. What trade would you recommend me to start, Lucy?'

'Don't attempt to start anything so dreary as trade,' Lucy advised him. 'Stay here and be comfortable in your old home.'

'What, saddle myself upon an indigent brother, who will barely be able to pay his way on three thousand pounds a year? No, no, Lucy! I would rather swindle him out of his rights. What's the matter, Roger? You look pale.'

'Nothing, brother. A sudden twinge of toothache. Really, I can't endure the thought of your crossing the sea. It was too bad of the old man to put me over you in this fashion. If you will stop here I will increase your allowance by fifty pounds a year so long as I can afford it.'

'You are generosity itself, Roger,' Philip says, grinnin. 'However, I dare not put so heavy a strain on your finances. It would ill become me to profit by a brother's ruin, and one can always beg if the worst comes.'

'Poor fellow!' Roger said. 'My heart aches for you. But no doubt you will do very well in the new world. Steady men always seem to get on there.'

'You consider me to be a steady man, then?' Philip axed wi a serious face, an' they o laughed. 'I must endeavour to merit your commendation, and between steadiness and matrimony tread safely on to fortune. I feared you would be making some childish proposal of dividing the estate with me, Roger; but you have more sense fortunately.'

Roger flushed an' stutted a bit at that, an' said, 'Nothing would give me greater pleasure, my dear Philip, if duty to my father and the principle of the thing permitted it. You must see under the circumstances——'

'Certainly, my dear fellow. Don't apologise. Let us be men of principle before all things.'

'That will be my chief aim, brother. In my position one should set an example to the common herd.'

'Your sentiments are noble, sir,' Philip said, 'and must find an echo in every honest bosom.'

When they went an' left him he walked up an' deawn th' reawm a good while afore he seemed to make his mind up; but he sattl't th' job at last.

'She loves him,' he said, 'and after all the villain is my brother. I play hearts;' an' pooin th' will eaut ov his pocket he ripped it into a hundherd bits an' went to bed."

Aw waited a while, expectin there were some moore to come, but th' cubbort didn't awse to gate again, so aw axed iv that were o th' tale.

"Yigh, that's t' lot; an' enough too, surelee."

"Be hanged to thy mak o' tales!" aw said. "Tha should ha' towd heaw Philip went o'er th' say an' coome back to find his brother dyead, or heaw somebry pieced th' bits o' th' will together again, or summat o' that mak, an' finish't thi parcel bi lappin some silver papper an' orange-blossom reaund it. Tha levs Vice crowin on th' midden, an' punces Virtue off eaut o' th' yard. That'll do noane i' books."

"It were so, books or no books. Philip ne'er coome back, an' Roger lived wi his wife an' childher as comfortable an' pratty a chap as ever were sin. Iv he'd ony throuble on his mind he kept it theere. Folk used to say he were raythera severe magisthrate, an' coome deawn heavy on dishonest folk when he'd a chance, but that were o aw ever yerd again him. He lived to be eighty year owd, an' aw ne'er seed a finer lookin gronfaythera i' mi life nor him."

"An' wheere would he go to when he dee'd, dost think?"

"Nay! he's ne'er spokken sin they buried him. There may some mak ov a lumber reawm for yo wick folk i' th' next world; some shop where croot hinges con be set sthraight an' brokken panels put in. Tha'll see in a bit. When aw fo i' lumps somebry 'll beet a fire wi th' pieces, an' side me off that road; tak care tha doesn't come to th' same end."

"Aw didn't expect thee to finish wi a sarmon," aw said. "It looks as iv ony timber-yead could preighch when tha starts. Ha'ever, aw'll do mi best to plez thee."

Just then a sarvant lass coome bustlin in. "Eleven o'clock, sir."

"Nay, for sure it!" aw co'd eaut, fair capped to find heaw th' time had flown. "Aw mun be bowtin, an' wi a rattle too."

So aw shook hondles wi th' talkin oak, catch't a glint o' gasleet on it breet face as iv it were winkin at me, an' scutther't off into th' eautside darkness.

Aw were so full o' mi tale 'at when aw geet wom aw towd th' owd beauty o abeaut it, welly talkin her asleep. When aw'd finished hoo turn't reaund an' axed,

"What hasta bin suppin?"

JAMES LEACH.

I.

We're most on us i' this part o' Lancashire weel acquainted wi Wardle as it stons to-day. Mony a one 'at reads this has walked up th' risin road fro th' Red Lion corner, past th' Egerton Club, as far as th' owd village, lyin deep in it green bason among th' close-hutchin hills. Pleasant walk it is, too. Tuthri yard up th' road a fine view oppens eaut east an' seauth. There's th' honsome warkheause teawer (we're never far eaut o' seet o' that i' Rachda), showin dark-red again a backgreaund o' blue-black moor, a wide sweep o' counthry curvin reaund toard Mildhro, an' close to us stons Smobridge Church, black wi th' sulks becose it should ha bin planted i' Spotlan; though it may weel be fain to have greaund fund for it onywheere considherin heaw feaw it is. Deawn a clough to th' reet hond th' owd brook comes windin, set off bi owd-fashion't breek chimbleys, marks ov a bygwone stage i' th' cotton thrade, an' belongin mostly to facthries lost i' rack an' ruin.

A piece fur on yo see th' church spire peepin up, an' then th' road dhrops deawn into th' village, a curious collection ov owd an' new—ancient hondloom weighvin chambers close to bran new square stone heauses—everything lookin clen an' thrim, as iv th' sweet moor-sweepin airs were i' th' habit o' fannin every speck o' dirt far away wi their fluttherin wings. Followin th' narrow twistin main sthreet, undher Yest Hill's brokken green-petched slope dotted wi greystone farms, we come soon to th' honsome church wi it slendher needle-like spire, an' iv we're lucky enough to lond at th' reet time we con yer th' crackedest, worst-toned bell i' Lancashire ringin fro th' steeple. Get a weel-brunt fryin-pon wi a biggish hole i' th' bottom, hang it on a clooas-line, hommer at it wi hawve-a-breek, an' yo'll have summat like that dismal seaund.

Next dur comes th' Co-op. Store, an' next to that th' Wesleyan Chapel an' Schoo ston hond i' hond together, facin th' owd Fowt o' Wardle, where some o' th' owdest buildins seem to be lingerin yet.

Fur on again we come to th' Primitive Methodist Chapel, Waythergrove Mill, an' so to some sthragglin farms an' rows o' stone cottages runnin up to th' very feet o' thoose fine hills—Breawn Wardle, Middle, Hades—stonnin, their sky-line stamped deep into every Rachda-groon heart, like bowd Horatius an' his mates at th' bridge, a solid-lookin three likely to want some gettin o'er.

Neaw, iv we could poo up these Wardle pavin sets an' flag-stones, levin a slutchy throd bordher't bi oppen ditches, shift

church, chapel, an' facthry, gaslamps, an' tallygraph wire, cart away o th' heauses obbut just an odd un here an' theere, levin little beside wild moor an' rough-tilled farms, we met happen get some notion o' what th' village were like a hundherd an' thirty year sin'.

No postman, no daily newspapper, no tay, no railway near, no hawve holidays—whatever could folk do wi theirsel i' sich times as that!

Greight doins were afloat then, up an' deawn th' world. George Third, owin to his fayther's mishap wi a cricket-bo, had bin king gettin on for two year, but William Pitt did th' gafferin for him (as he'd latly done for th' Second George) whol parliment put it motty in an' William turned his job up. He'd made things lively for hawve-a-dozen year or so, had William. Feightin undher Clive i' India, undher Wolfe i' Canada, warmin th' French at Minden, sinkin a whol fleet for 'em off Bretagne undher Hawke, English sodiers an' sailors were kept busy, Pitt eggin 'em on an' findin brass enough for peawdher. When o thoose risky gams were won th' owd brid wanted to have a shot at Spain, but Parliment said they were spent up an' wouldn't pay for his friskin, so William poo'd his clogs off an' sattl't deawn retired, th' Heause o' Commons, as they'd no brass, findin him a pension o' three theausan peaund a year—enough to keep a cotton facthry, say nowt abeaut one chap.

Iv th' brass had bin gien to Richard Arkwright, abeaut thirty year owd at that time, or to James Watt, four year younger, happen some betther use met ha bin made on it. Iv onybody could ha towd Feightin Pitt 'at thoose two hard-wortchin young chaps—one wi a styem engine, t'other wi a spinnin frame—were beaun to give th' world a shove forrad an' send English credit up as he'd never done wi o his blood an' gowd, heaw Billy would ha laughed!

Among o these happenins—past, present, or soon to come—fair i' t' thick o' rowlin cannon an' swillin blood, coome th' year 1762, when Peter Third climbed onto th' Russian throne, an' James Leach were born i' Wardle.

There'd be no public rejoicins when James coome into th' world, for he were no greight mon's chilt. Nobry ever dhrem't he were owt different fro babbies i' general. He were nobbut another to th' rook o' weighvers' childher, an' barrin a saup o' rum for th' kessenin baggin there'd be no fuss made o'er him.

Whol Mrs. Leach rocked her babby in his cradle throuble were brewin wi America. Th' English lords, anxious to get back some o' th' brass Pitt had cobbed away so free an' bowd, started taxin th' Yankees for papper, tay, glass an' what not, a piece o' foolishness 'at brought on sich a war as we never wanten to see again.

Plenty o' poor folk were short o' brass then, as weel as th' Parliment. Weighvers, sthrange to say, for one lot, were noane

weighted deawn mich wi gowd, an' it's likely owd Leach had to threddle away hard at his looms to keep his family gooin. Little James were noane lapped i' rose-levs, nor fed on choice dainties. Porritch an' clogs ud be abeaut his mark; but he geet enough to keep him wick some road, grew too big for a cradle an' started runnin abeaut on his own legs.

Lonesome an' wild as th' Wardle moors were then, folk livin theere had one greight gift to breeten their lives, help off their spare time, an' heighve their deawn-sweighed thoughts up to a heigher level. That greight an' precious gift, dhropped sthraight fro heaven to give folk feelins an' hopes deeper nor words con say or thoughts reighch, were music. To be sure it were no yezzy job then larnin to play or sing, There were no concerts every week, no pianos in th' cottages, no professors wi part o' th' alphabet hangin fro their name-ends; smo chance, one met think, wi neighbours scarce an' roads bad, o' folk getherin to practise mich.

But, bless yo! music charms away deaubts an' hindhrances, lurryin it followers up an' deawn t' counthry just as it wants, never axin 'em whether *they* wanten or not, an' among other spots it lurried some on 'em to Wardle. Fiddlers, clarionet an' flute blowers, horse-leg an' sarpent wrostlers, players on brass thrumpets big an' little, singers ov o sorts, gether't fro miles reaund whenever their scant holiday heaurs gav 'em a chance, wortchin away at bits ov Handel or Haydn, carryin to an' again wi 'em weel-prized copies o' chorus or anthem mostly written bi their own honds.

Owd Isaac Bamford, betther known as Isaac o' Lijah's, were olez t' conducthor at Wardle music meetins. Ditherin Isaac he were oft co'd, fro his habit o' makin his voice thremble when he sang, oather to seaund pathetic or summat, an' everybody alleawed him to be one o' th' best-larn't an cliverest music-teighchers i' Lancashire. He'd bin sent for moore nor once to sing alto in th' London festival concerts, an' happen fancied hissel a bit becose o' that honour. Fro Rachda to Littleborough, an' it were even said as far as Walsden, Isaac were known as a rare chap to conduct band or chorus; so he'd olez summat gooin on i' th' music line, for singin days, oratorios, or sichlike.

Owd Leach were as fond o' music as onybody, played very weel on a fiddle, an' liked nowt betther nor to see tuthri mates in his heause helpin him to grind t' dyead maisthers o'er again, or put some weight into a good owd psalm tune. One neet Isaac happen't to be theere gafferin o'er a sthreng quartet, when he noticed little James waggin his arm an' croonin to th' music. Th' lad were abeaut four year owd then, an' he'd bin rayther fayverish an' fractious, sittin cryin bi th' fire wi his warchin yead on his mother's knee; but th' music sooth't an' intheristed him as soon as th' fiddles sthruck up, an' he followed th' air fro th' first note to th' last, ahmin afther it as weel as he could.

Ahmin, aiming.

"See yo theere!" says owd Isaac. "Did onybody ever! He's keepin time as steady as aw con mysel, an' aw'm th' best time-keeper i' Englan. He's thryin to sing th' melody too. Nay! this sheds o! Why, Layche, that babby mun ha music born in him."

"He may have," Leach said. "He yeawls keen enough at times."

"Tak yo notice, neaw," says Isaac, seein a good chance for a bit o' prophetic business. "This chilt's beaun to be a greight musicianer. Aw'm a judge o' these things, as yo known, so just tak notice. He met live to be co'd on to Lunnon yet, same as me."

"It'll tak him a good while to get up to yor pitch, Isaac," Leach said. "There's noane mony wi sich a rare knack as yo."

"Aw'm gettin eldherly," says Isaac, "an there's nobry shappin to tak howd o' mi job yet. Iv this chilt con larn th' business he shall do, an' aw'll do mi best to get him forrad wi his thoroughbass an' th' scales."

"Thank yo," Mrs. Leach said. "Iv Jimmy's owt inside him yo'll fot it eaut iv onybody con. It's very good on yo, aw'm sure."

"Well, it may be thought lucky 'at aw'm here to teighch him," Isaac chuckl't, rubbin his honds together, weel-satisfied. "There's happen few i' England con do moore for him."

James were i' no hurry to prove Isaac a chap o' foreseet. He played abeaut as long as his fayther leet him, turnin to th' weighvin thrade i' good time, an' catchin what bits o' schoo-larnin he ever had i' ony odd heaurs 'at sarved. He showed moore taste for toffy an' marbles nor for music, takkin scant intherist in Isaac's teighchin an' larnin little. At twelve year owd he could fiddle a bit, sing a bit, think a lot, an' wandher abeaut bi hissel for ony length o' time beaut gettin weary. He'd never mich to say for hissel, an' oft enough when talkin were gooin on close to him he'd sit lookin at nowt, hearkenin nowt, lapped up in hissel i' some quare fashion, as iv he'd another lad inside him, an' they were hatchin saycrets together.

Gentle, quiet, rayther bashful manners grew fro his thoughtful habits an' lonesome wandherins, helpin to get him everybody's good opinion; an' undher o t' lad's silence and shyness there were summat likeable abeaut him, some rare thread o' feelin or fancy 'at folk could feel beaut knowin what stirred 'em.

A slendher, delicate, thin-skinned lad, James fund th' village mates ov his own size rayther too rough, so he bother't 'em little. Happen he fund lasses betther to get on wi, for tuthri year moore fund him whisperin nearly every neet to a neighbour's daughther, an' it soon geet known 'at these two were cwortin, though wi little seet o' gettin wed for mony a long year to come. Their faythers an' mothers grumbl't an' snighed a bit, co'in 'em foolish babbies,

tellin 'em no sensible folk geet wed whol they'd turn't forty year owd, givin 'em o th' owd advice o'er again spokken bi so mony theausan parents, an' so little heeded bi their rackless childher, but wise talk were nobbut wasted on thoose two. Young James, shy i' general, were bowd enough upo this point, an' his lass in a modest way showed hersel as determin't as he were; so afther a while th' owd folk geet weary o' botherin, an' th' young uns went on sweetheartin beaut onybody meddlin wi 'em.

II.

Abeaut this time owd Isaac noticed 'at his pupil started takkin moore intherist in th' music lessons, an' iv his e'eseet had bin clear he met ha noticed beside 'at th' scholar knew a dyel moore nor his maisther. James had olez bin a bit ov a puzzle to th' owd chap sin' they'd takken music i' hond together. Th' lad cared little or nowt for larnin long rules off bi heart, wouldn't lumber his mind up wi th' lappins an' packin-cases o' knowledge, an' ne'er took mich notice ov his teighcher's kest-iron notions as to what were reet or wrong; yet he'd olez a knack ov axin questions 'at dived deep into th' rezon o' things, botherin Isaac aboon a bit to undherston what he were dhrivin at, say nowt ov onswerin him. James took in o he were towd, every fresh step forrad lookin to come yezzy to him. His ear were keen an' thrue, his time steady as a clock, his inseet into new pieces swift and sure; but he could nobbut larn in his own road, an' as that road were different fro Isaac's he'd to put up wi th' charicther ov a dull scholar. James hissel knew no different. Shy, self-watchin, livin most ov his time in a thought-built fanciful world ov his own wheere vanity ne'er geet foot-howd, this quare lad knew little or nowt what rare talents were fast grooin ripe in him, an' ne'er dhrem't o' pushin hissel forrad.

Heawever, neaw he'd getten to be a young chap wi th' responsibility ov a pratty sweetheart on his honds, this dhremer wakken't up o ov a sudden, bucklin to at his lessons wi a relish, an' sperrin off Isaac whol th' owd brid oft felt muddl't. His own studies had ne'er takken him far past a knowledge o' simple chords or th' knack ov arrangin bits o' things for a band, but this fawse scholar started talkin abeaut countherpoint, fugue, modulation, part-writin, an' sichlike—things Isaac knew bi seet, but could hardly be said to have speighkin acquaintance wi.

Th' fashion i' music at that day were o for orniments an' flourishes. Turns, shakes, an' grace-notes were crommed in bi wholsale, so 'at very oft there were moore twiddle nor tune. Neaw Isaac had two or three patent flourishes ov his own 'at he were very

Sperrin, enquiring.

fond o' stickin into whatever classical piece he took i' hond; an' he'd tuthri dodges o' makin pauses, hurryin up or howdin back, at places where th' composers said nowt abeaut it. Through long experience these bits o' quirks had com'n to look important to Isaac, an' when he fund James took no notice on 'em he could nobbut think th' lad were gettin stuck-up. As for thinkin his own style o' teighchin met be wrong, sich a fancy were th' last thing likely to come into his yead. His t'other scholars were satisfied to tak what he gav 'em, ne'er botherin their yeads an' his wi thinkin too mich o'er th' lessons, but this Leach lad were olez wantin to know moore nor th' teighcher could tell, whol Isaac geet deaubtful sometimes whether he were teighchin Jimmy or Jimmy were teighchin him.

Other folk were gettin deaubtful, too. Isaac were a rare mon at his job, to be sure, but—well, he were noane as young as he used to be, yo known, an' some road young Leach had a wonderful knack. He could hondle a band some weel, stirrin up o skulkin players 'at thried to dodge their parts, an' not a wrong note could be cheted past his sensitive ears. Awkart bits for wind or sthrengs, whatever keigh or clef they were written in, he could play at seet, makin th' band chaps feel in a crack heaw to phrase an' wheere to play leaud or soft. Above o things he'd have a composer's directions followed just as they were written deawn, happen thinkin th' music-maker knew what he wanted as weel or betther nor onybody else.

As for singers he could tuthor 'em some rarely! He'd have no sweighin one note into another, like shuttherin cobs deawn a cellar-hole, no fancy variations bi tenors or altos hawve-larn't i' their parts, no cheawin o' music nor rowlin it reaund throat or tongue afore it coome eaut, no shade o' sharpness or flatness, no slackenin or hurryin o' time, no murdherin o' words, no cowd hawve-hearted rendherin o' pieces red-wot fro th' lastin fire o' genius. Iv ony part geet stuck fast he could help 'em eaut wi his sweet hee-pitched voice in a way they couldn't miss but follow, an' it were seldom th' owdest experienced members ov a chorus practised undher him beaut larnin summat likely to do 'em good.

We may guess fro these things 'at iv James had been like some young chaps he could very soon ha put poor owd Isaac's nose eaut o' joint, takken o th' best wark off him, an' fair brokken his heart; for heawever willin th' owd chap met be to turn his business o'er to James when he'd finished wi it hissel, we con be sure he wouldn't ha fancied bein shoved eaut bi one ov his own scholars. But eaur young weighver were as modest an' reet-minded as he were cliver; an' so far fro thryin to best Isaac or play undherhond thricks on him, he took care an' throuble to keep hissel i' th' backgreaund as long as he could, an' to respect th' owd brid's quirks an' owd-fashion't ideas whether they were reet or wrong.

That greight conducthor, Time, kept on waggin his stick o this while, an' one day owd Mrs. Leach said to her husban,

"Jimmy's twenty year owd this week. Could onybody believe years had flown so fast sin he're born! He's groon up sthrong an' hearty, an' that's a blessin; but eh! aw do wish he'd give o'er runnin afther yon lass an' think moore ov his good wom!"

"Husht!" Leach says, laughin quietly. "Jim's a steady, hard-wortchin lad, as good a weighver as we han i' Wardle, an' what moore would ta have? Blame Adam, iv tha's a mind, for settin sich a bad example, but ne'er blame th' lad hissel. He's gettin on weel wi his music neaw, owd Isaac says, an' shaps for makin summat on it. As soon as he con see his road to keepin two he'll be gettin wed, aw'll uphowd ta. There's eaur Mary too—hoo'll be eighteen dhirectly, so it'll be her turn afore long."

"Her turn!" Mrs. Leach co'd eaut. "Iv aw catch onybody runnin afther *her* aw'll make it warm for him. Folk'll bi cwortin i' their cradles next!"

"They met do wur," says Leach. "Wark's a dhry job where there's no love to breeten it. Eaur Mary's too honsome an' sensible to be left single so long, make up thi mind to that."

"Eh, dear!" t' mother sighed. "We'n o t' trouble an' care o' rearin these childher, an' they thinkin o' nowt but levin as soon as they con shap it."

Th' husband laughed again, an' nobbut said, "It's a way we'n olez had i' th' Laych family. Weddin an' singin's what we're noted for."

Th' same neet James were conductin a band practice at Smobridge, for he'd gettin to be oft wanted at jobs o' that sort. Isaac were there, to see heaw his pupil shapped, an' they walked wom together when th' wark were o'er, carryin a lanthron to pike there road by.

"Tha'rt mendin, Jimmy," says Isaac, pathronisin his pupil, as maisthers olez will. "Aw'd getten to think tha'd nobbut turn eaut a numb scholar, but tha'rt mendin nicely neaw an' larnin to keep thi grip on th' band. Yon hobye player missed comin in twice when tha gav him th' nod, aw noticed. Tha mun ston noane o' that, think on. Poo 'em up, iv there's owt wrong! Poo 'em up!"

"Aw've just had a word wi him," James said, in a quiet consídherin way o' talkin nathural to him. "It's Billy Howarth, th' stonemason, an' he's nobbut a young player yo known, beaut mich practice. Aw felt for him a bit, an' thought aw wouldn't show him up afore o th' band chaps an' th' chapel singers. Aw'll see him to-morn—he's th' makins ov a good musician in him, aw con tell."

"Well, it may pass for an odd time," Isaac says, waggin his yead rayther dubious, "but we mun have things done reet, tha knows, shuz what happens. Tha'rt too soft-hearted to make a gradely good conducthor, aw deaubt; not but what tha shaps very

weel—very weel! 'Comfort ye' were too slow raythe—aw've towd thee afore to get on middlin wi thi speed theere, becose th' air's so long—th' tenor seaunds as iv he'd ne'er get done, an' folk starten wondherin when th' oritory's beaun to gate."

"We'n o eaur own ideas abeaut these things, aw guess," th' pupil said. "Aw were thryin to get th' music sung as Handel myen't it to be done, ne'er thinkin whether folk liked it or not. Iv they didn't so mich wur for 'em."

"Ideas!" bawl't Isaac, very near fo'in into a slutch-hole through bein' too excited to watch his feet on th' narrow throd. "Tha mun have no ideas yet, mon! Do as aw tell thee, an' rest satisfied to be a larner another ten year. Ideas be hanged! Tha'rt gettin consayted, aw yer."

"Aw think not," James said, wi a curious smile common to him, as iv he were onswerin some inside thoughts ov his own as weel as talkin to th' owd chap.

"But aw'm sure on't," Isaac slutther't. "Tha'd never reckon to set thi ideas again mine iv tha werenot. Neaw, Jimmy, aw beg on thee, whatever tha does else, mind fro gettin consayted! There's nowt wur nor that! Keep thi own level, mi lad, an' never let me yer thee brag this road again as long as tha lives."

"Mind yor feet, owd friend," James said, just catchin Isaac as he were sluttherin into th' ditch. "It's very slutchy to-neet."

"Once let consayt get howd o' thee an' tha'rt done," Isaac went on, thinkin ov his sarmon moore nor his clogs. "Tha con sing weel an' play weel, but iv ever tha myens takkin my shop an' bein looked up to as th' best chorus teighcher an' most experienced musicianer in o England, same as me, tha mun keep consayt eaut o' thi road."

James chuckl't to hissel, but he'd a dyel too mich likin an' respect for th' owd brid to say owt likely to hurt his feelins, so he kept his tongue inside his teeth.

When Isaac londed at his heause dur, afther some hard fleaundherin up th' dirty lone, he'd part ov his lesson to liver o'er again afore he could say good neet to his patient scholar.

"Do watch thysel, neaw, for gettin preaud. Iv aw'd gien way to sich feelins mysel where should aw ha bin, dost think? An' yet iv onybody's an excuse for bein consayted it's happen a chap 'at's sung i' th' Lunnon concerts, wi a whol row o' kings an' queens on th' front form. Just think on tha knows nowt but what aw've larn't thee."

"Nowt at o?" James axed, puttin on his curious double smile again, knowin th' owd pottato couldn't see it i' th' dark.

"Why, what else conta know? Tha's ne'er bin nowheere nobbut Wardle. Who's ever teighched thee owt beside me?"

"Nobry," James towd him. "Yo're mi only teighcher, Isaac."

"Well, that sattles it, then; so tak a pattheran fro me an' think little o' thysel. Good neet, my lad, an' God bless thee."

"Good neet to yo," says James, sthridin forrad toard wom wi t' lanthron, thinkin to hissel, "There's summat in this yead o' mine 'at Isaac never put theere, afther o, shuz wheere it coome fro."

He londed safe awoin i' Wardle fowt, geet his supper, chatted wi th' owd folk a while in his quiet cheerful way, an' took hissel off to bed.

"What would Isaac say," James axed hissel, layin tindher-box an' long match ready for mornin, poppin his candle eaut an' slippin between th' blankets, "what would Isaac say iv he knew aw'd turn't composer?"

A corn-crake, throubl't wi th' neet-mare in a fielt across th' lone, set up a yarkin seaund 'at ripped into th' young chap's delicate nerves, so he lapped his ears up an' fell asleep beaut waitin for ony betther onswer to his question.

III.

Next mornin eaur ploddin young musician were up threddin at his loom afore th' March sun showed it weel-sceaur't threncher above Yest Hill. Breakfast-time fund him ready for his porritch, an' another hawve-heaur seed him back at his wark again, weighvin away as iv th' world were beaun to be stopped for cloth iv he didn't keep his yells stirrin. His thoughts were noane i'th' loom-chamber, iv his body were. Mony a longin look he sent through his smo-quarrell't window at fielt an' hill just breetenin into green, mony a sthrain he hummed an' whistl't, an' once or twice he stopped a minute to dot deawn tuthri notes on a bit o' music papper, gatin his loom again wi new sperrit when he'd done.

Dinner-time coome reaund in a while, an' when his share o' th' meight were etten James walked eaut into th' sunshine for tuthri minutes, crossin th' lone to where a big wareheause were bein built, just above where th' Wesleyan Chapel stons neaw. Theere he fund a stonemason, about a year younger nor hissell, chippin away at a smooth flag, and singin this:

"Oh! iv aw were a robin aw'd sit in a thorn,
An' chirp to mi thrue love fro neaw whol to-morn;
Iv aw were a layrock aw'd sing up aboon,
An' slur into th' sky on a rainbow o' tune;
But here aw'm a maundherin thrailer on th' floor,
So what con aw do mi wot passion to cure?
Aw oather mun keep it or cob it away,
Or give it mi thrue love some mornin i' May.

Foldherdol laddy!
Foldherdol laddy!
Foldherdol oldherdol oldherdol lay!"

"What mak o' classical music doesta co that?" James axed, sittin him deawn on a stone-block.

"Heaw do, Jimmy!" th' singer said, turnin reaund a plump red face wi a wide grin on it. "Tha looks as white as a candle an' as thin as a hayrake. Heaw dost feel?"

"Aw'm ailin nowt particlar" James said, smilin at th' lusty steaut-set young mason. "We cawn't o be as fresh an' sthrong as thee, Billy, kept eaut o'th' sun as mich as we are."

"Tha should ha larn't a dacent thrade," Billy says; "weighvin's nowt. But tha'll be settin up as a music chap afore long, aw reckon, an' then tha'll be abeaut reet."

"Happen so. Will that hobye part be reet for Sunday? Aw want thee to play it at th' sarvice here."

"Reet an' plumb! Aw'll twitther it off, tha'll see. A bit moore practice wi th' band an' aw'll play owt tha con set me, so make up thi mind to that, Misther Jimmy. Who's preighchin o' Sunday neet?"

"Mi uncle John's comin o'er fro Rachda."

"Oh, he is, is he?" Billy says, wi a hearty laugh. "Well, he's a dacent owd cock, is John! He'll tell us some rare tales, aw'll warrand. Aw recollect him tellin o'er him bein left awom to rock th' babby when he were a lad at Hey Barn, whol his mother went to th' Baptist chapel next dur, an' heaw he geet some lengths o' bant, teed 'em end to end, an' crept to th' chapel window, hearkenin to th' sarmon an' keepin t' kayther gooin' at th' same time. Is that thrue, Jimmy?"

"Aw believe it is. It looks as iv he were myent for th' preighchin business, doesn't it?"

"Yigh; but he'd little think then o' livin to be one o' Wesley's journeymen. Well, aw guess iv he's comin thi sisther 'll be gooin to th' sarvice."

"What Mary? To be sure; we're o gooin, aw expect. What for?"

Billy studied his wark a minute, whistlin softly. He were carvin some capital letthers on his square flag, wi a ring o' rope bordherin reaund 'em, an' orniments at th' corners like bits o' brokken clog irons—an' carvin weel, too, as onybody may soon see, for th' stone's yon yet built into th' wole. Then he rubbed his chisel point, scrat his knob, said "Oh, nowt!" an' fell to his chippin again.

James chuckl't to hissel as iv he scented a joke somewheere, stood a minute watchin th' mallet rise an' fo, an' then said,

"Aw mun get yon loom on again. Slip in to-neet, Billy, an' we'll thry thoose awkart runs together."

"Aw cawn't come to-neet," Billy said, stuttin a bit.

"It's nobbut tuthri minutes ov a job. What's makin thee so busy?"

"Aw've to go deawn to Sleighty abeaut a dog." Billy stutted, beaut lookin up, "an' then aw've a chap to see o'er th' Starrin to sattle abeaut some wark, an' there's tuthri moore odd jobs want lookin to. Aw cawn't come to-neet."

"Well, ony time," James said, an' went back to his loom laughin to hissel.

"Mary?" he co'd eaut to his sisther as he went through th' kitchen; an' Mary coom fro t' butthery, axin

"Well?"

"Aw'll teighch thee that song o' Purcell's to-neet," James said, looking at her wi a sly glint in his e'en. "I'v tha'rt for singin it o' Sunday it's time to be framin."

Mary were tall, good-lookin, an' as rosy-cheeked as o th' Wardle lasses. "There'll hardly be time to-neet, Jimmy," hoo said afther a minute. "Aw've to goo eaut."

"Wheere to?"

"A bit ov an arrand," Mary says, flushin up an' bowtin eaut ov his road; so James set to at his wark again laughin moore nor ever.

Soon afther t' baggin were o'er Mary put her shawl on an' went deawn th' road, sayin hoo'd to co at Mary Ann Buckley's. Tuthri minutes afther Billy Howarth went swingin deawn i' th' same direction at five mile to th' heaur. Toard bedtime, as th' neet were clear, James wandher't up th' lone a mile or so th' opposite road on an coome face to face wi these two dodgers, plain to be sin undher t' stars.

"Hello!" says James, quite simple. "Aw thought tha were at Mary Ann's, lass. Well, Billy, what abeaut yon dog?"

Billy sit him deawn i' th' hedge-bottom an' laughed whol his ribs were sore. "Neaw, Jimmy," he said at last, "whisper a word o' this to onybody else an' tha'll ne'er play th' fiddle again!"

"Nonsense!" James said. "What are yo freetent on, yo two? There's no credit i' this undherhond wark, an' th' sooner yo con get some undherstonnin wi th' owd folk t' betther it'll be. There's Mary here thremblin like a lev. What are yo freetent on? Come on wi me wom, an' we'll soon sattle it."

"Eh, aw darnot!" Mary said. "Dunnot say a word, Jimmy; dunnot! They'll yer soon enough, an' whatever would mi mother say?"

"Aw care little what thi mother says," Billy put in gettin on his feet again, "but thi fayther's a big sthrong chap, an' his clogs looken to be a tidy weight. Thee howd thi tongue, Jimmy Laych, an' wait whol we're ready."

"Why, plez yorsel," James said, as they walked deawn toard th' village. "Plez yorsel, an' yo'll be longest satisfied; but iv yo takken my advice yo'll be sthraightforrad wi yor cwortin, an' make it known. Heaw will it be to sattle th' job o' Sunday neet, whol uncle John's here, Mary?"

"Say no moore iv tha wants me to sleep," Mary said. "Aw darn't think o' sich a thing."

Sunday coome, an' John Leach went sthridin up fro Rachda to th' Wardle meetin-reawm, a big loft runnin o'er th' aleheause i' th' fowt. He were a sthrong honsome chap o' fifty, just a reet sample o' that wandherin band o' Wesleyan parsons 'at were doin so mich good then up an' deawn among th' little villages.

Th' long low room were packed full, an' o th' local music talent were theere to help. Isaac conducted, James an' Billy were i' th' band an' their sweethearts i' th' choir. Th' skyleets were set oppen for ventilation, lettin in a rush o' cool air an' a twittherin chorus fro th' brids eautside; an' theere wi sweet voices an' reverent hearts, that little congregation o' yearnest Christians worshipped their common Father.

John were a born preighcher, like mony another 'at that moore famous John gether't reaund him. Plain an' simple, sensible in a pleasant, intheristin way, deepenin neaw an' again into weight an' force, he dhrew o hearts an' ears to th' stirrin ov his tongue, makin o his relations preaud to see an' yer him.

When th' sarvice were o'er he complimented his nevvy. "I understand you have been training the choir lately, James," says he, "and certainly I never heard them sing better. You will have to make music your profession."

"Not yet a bit," James laughed. "It's some o' these young women 'at maken th' music so sweet—eaur Mary here an' mi sweetheart an' tuthri moore. Their voices are like bells."

"I wish you would come over to Rochdale and settle there," John said. "You would be sure to succeed, and could certainly command a better living than you can ever hope to do by weaving. I have many friends who could put you on the high road to fortune."

"It may happen come to that some day," James said, "but aw mun plod on here a bit longer first. There mun be no fo'in deawn again for want o' patience i' climbin."

"You are not very enterprising," says John. "Somehow you appear to live in a sort of dream, with little interest in what goes on about you in the world. Still you are not wanting in energy. I can't altogether read your character yet."

"Aw cawn't mysel," James laughed. "But ne'er heed! It's o thought eaut as fur as con be."

There were a creawded reawm again when th' candles were let for th' evenin sarvice. Billy geet theere i' good time, an' feelin rayther dhryish he slipped in at th' aleheause back dur to get a gill, an' stopped chattherin theere wi some mates, in a leet-hearted carless way he had, whol th' full rich seaund ov a hymn above his yead towd him he'd tarried too long.

Nevvy, nephew.

"Na then!" says Billy, wiping his meauth, pikin up his hobye an' makin for th' stairs eautside. "They're pewdlin an' singin, an' me noane theere! What'll Mary say neaw? Aw've made a job o' this, an' at t' front ov o these Layches too! This comes o' bein a band chap. That weddin wain't come off neaw, aw deaubt!"

When he geet to th' stairs yead he'd to stop, for th' reawm were so creawded he could hardly squeeze hissel in; so theere he stood, just inside th' dur, th' hobye undher his arm, feelin as miserable as a scoded kittlin. He yerd John read a lesson in his clear solemn voice, an' then seed James ston up to sing. A symphony o' brokken phrases an' plaintive notes, like sobs o' pain, an' th' purest, best-managed voice among thoose hills were lifted in a sthrain o' deep but tendher sorrow.

"He was despiséd"—sang James—"He was despiséd and rejected of men; a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief."

Isaac's fiddle throbbed in between th' voice parts wi heart-breighkin cadence, an' th' singer, feelin Handel's music thrill into th' very marrow ov his heart, sang wi peawer an' passion, carryin o afore him.

Billy blinked, rubbed his sleeve across his e'en, sniffed, an' then had to poo his hanketcher eaut, lettin th' tears rowl deawn whol he could hardly see th' singer's tall slendher figure an' clear-cut face.

James sit him deawn again, th' hush an' stillness were brokken bi whisper an' restless stir, e'en were wiped dhry, an' poor Billy crept deawn th' stairs. He could ston no moore.

"Where hast bin?" grunted Isaac, as he coome deawn t' laddher an' fund his hobye player at th' bottom. "Tha'rt a smart mon to play in a band!"

"Aw couldn't get in," Billy said. "Aw ne'er seed sich a creawd afore."

Isaac looked black at him an' went, and Billy hutched back into a dark corner as th' Layches started coming deawn. Mary were last among 'em, an' hoo looked reaund th' fowt as iv expecting to see somebody theere.

"Whatever's bin to do, William?" hoo axed when th' mason had pyched up to her. "Aw've bin some unyezzy o neet!"

"Tha'd no need," Billy said in a dismal keigh; "aw were rayther too lat, that's o."

"Too lat!" Mary poo'd her hanketcher eaut as tears started rowlin. "Tha were happen noane o'er anxious to come."

"Give o'er!" Billy said. "Aw'd ha gien out to squeeze in, but it were no go. Iv tha co's me ony moore aw'll run away an' dhreawn mysel! It were o accident, like. Aw stopped for oil, same as th' ten vargins, an' neaw aw feel as foolish as they did."

Scoded, scalded.

"Eh, what a pity! Eaur John preighched a grand sarmon, an' Jimmy sang as aw've ne'er yerd him do afore. It *is* a pity tha missed it."

"Aw yerd him sing," Billy says. "It's been a greight day for yo Layches. Well, aw'll be gooin; yor folk'll wondher where tha's getten to."

Just then James coome to th' heause dur an' sheauted, "Mary!"

"Eh, my goodness!" Mary says. "Aw *mun* goo, or he'll have 'em o eaut starin at us in a minute."

"Is that thee, Billy?" James sheauted again, walkin toard 'em. "Come in an' have a bit o' supper wi us? Heaw leets tha didn't come into th' band to-neet afther o th' bother o' larnin thi part?"

"Aw had to meet a chap just across theere, so it thrut me late," Billy said, jertin a thumb o'er his shooldher.

"Were it abeaut a dog?" James axed laughin.

"Nowe, it werenot!" Billy says, rayther sulky. "Iv tha thinks aw'm a liar, co me one."

"Aw'll co thee nowt," says James. "Come in, aw tell thee."

He took Billy bi one arm an' Mary bi another, takkin 'em bwoth wi him into th' heause, where his fayther, mother, an' uncle sit gettin their suppers.

"Look here, neaw," James said, stonnin wi his victims in a row. "Did yo ever see a prattier couple nor these two childher? They'n started cwortin, an' aw've persuaded 'em to come a tellin yo."

"For shame o' thi face, Jimmy!" t' mother said, beauncin up. "Go thi ways, tha impident young pousement; an' as for thee, Mary, aw fair wondher heaw tha con ston theere an' look mi i' th' face."

Mary looked fit to dhrop, an' felt to be brunnin fro yead to foot; but hoo knew they were in for it neaw, an' mut sattle th' job one road or another, so hoo stood her greaund, stickin fast to James's arm.

"Tak thi time a minute," owd Leach said, puttin a soothin hond on his wife's shooldher. "Whose lad arta?"

"Aw'm Billy o' Ben's," th' mason said, feelin bowd an' like a mon neaw th' warst shock were o'er. "Howarth's mi Sunday name, but aw'm best known as Billy wi th' Pipes."

"And how did you get that curious name?" John axed him.

"Oh! nobbut becose aw play whistles, an' flutes, an' hobyes, an sich things."

"We wanton no pipes here," Mrs. Leach grumbl't. "Be off wi tha!"

"Nay, nay!" th' husband said, wi a twist o' humour on his lip. "We're little used to turnin folk eaut o' this heause at sich short notice. What is it tha wants, Billy? Speighk up!"

Thrut, threw.

"Aw want nowt nobbut this lass o' yors," Billy said, "an hoo wants nowt nobbut me; an' we s' ne'er give o'er wantin noather, whol we liven. So neaw plez yorsel."

"Pointed and forcible," says John, smilin. "Whitefield himself could not have made a proposal in fitter terms."

"Hear, hear," James said, laughin. "Iv tha hasn't sattl't it neaw, Billy, aw dun know what con do. Neaw, mother, it's no use botherin no moore—iv yo wain't consent aw'll get uncle John to wed 'em sthraight off an' ha done wi 't. Billy's a good lad an' Mary cawn't mend her choice."

"Pipes, too!" grumbl't his mother, lookin some savage at th' bowd stone-mason.

"Betther pipes nor pistils," said owd Leach, wi th' wisdom ov experience. "Aw towd thee heaw it'd be, an' aw'd rayther have a music-blower for son-i'-law nor a sodier. Hang thy cap up, Billy, and sit thee deawn. Aw'll tak thee on thrial for a week or two. Come, here Mary, tha sly puss, an' get thi supper."

So Mary crept reaund to kiss her fayther an' mother, an' sit deawn saying nowt but lookin happy.

"Mun aw cut thee some beef, Billy?" James axed flourishin a knife an' fork.

"Nowe," Billy said, an' he sit him deawn between his sweetheart an th' parson, feelin as iv he'd bin part hanged an' were just gettin nicely reaund again; "aw'll have a thraycle buttercake for once—there's nowt else good enough for sich a dooment as this!"

IV.

Heawever busy he met be helpin forrad his sisther's sweetheartin, James didn't forget his own. He'd bin lucky enough to choose a good an' sensible lass, one likely to be some use in a heause beside ornimentin it, an' th' course o' their love ran as smooth as it mostly does among simple-minded busy-honded folk. In a while, th' young chap bein close on three-an'-twenty an' his sweetheart a couple o' year younger, they geet wed, settin up in a heause o' their own, where they felt as happy as two brids in a bush.

"Aw'm beaun a puttin th' axins up, Billy," James had said to th' young mason. "Tha'd best come too, an' we con o be wed together."

"Howd off!" Billy said. "Aw'll have a weddin o' mi own when aw do start; but aw mun chip at tuthri moore boudhers afore that happens."

So Billy stood as best mon at th' weddin, an' some gam he made, helpin to tee th' young couple up wi every prospect afore 'em o' contented lives. Eaur risin musician had made hissel a name bi that time, getten together a tidy teighchin connection, an'

even bin to Lunnon, singin at th' greight concerts owd Isaac thought so mich abeaut; but like a sensible mon he stuck to his looms yet, though not so close as he'd bin forced to do once ov a day, to be sure.

So modest an' misthrustful were this shy lad abeaut hissel an' his wark, 'at it were nobbut tuthri week afther t' weddin he durst tell his wife he'd made an' written deawn a lot o' psalm-tunes, an' heaw his greight hope an' ambition were to be known as a music composer, an' live to see his tunes get into general use. So, as yo met guess, nowt ud do then but he mut bring his precious bits o' papper eaut, sing his airs through an' play 'em on th' fiddle, whol his wife larn't 'em off an' join't in wi her clear thribble. It were a sweet heaur for th' young musician when he yerd his own notes fro thoose lips he loved, an' sweet for th' young wife to lend seaund to her husband's long-hud fancies.

"Eh, James!" hoo said when he laid his fiddle deawn. "Heaw grand they are! An' to think nobry knows these fine tunes nobbut us!"

"*Are* they fine, Esther?" says James, axin hissel as mich as his wife. "*Will* they be sung? Or is it nowt but blint vanity o' my side an' love o' thine?"

"Let Isaac look at 'em," Esther said. "He'll be sure to know."

"Tha's greight faith i' what Isaac thinks." James said, laughin. "But he shall see 'em, my lass, an' yer 'em too. Aw've nobbut kept 'em by me long enough to feel sure they're as good as aw con make 'em."

"Just think o' thee bein a music composer," says Esther, clappin her honds. "It's wondherful!"

"Aw con remember, ever sin aw were a little pottherin lad," James said in his thougtful way, "havin a sort o' fancy 'at aw could yer sweet sthrains seaundin inside mi yead, comin fro wheere aw could never tell. For a good while aw thought other folk mut have th' same sensations, but grooin owdher aw soon fund that were a mistake. Iv chaps i' th' general had music in their yeads same as aw have it they'd be a lot betther nor they are—kindher, less selfish, moore honest a dyel. It took me a time to find what ailed me, for though Isaac were reckonin to teighch me music, o he showed me were cowd an' dyead. Aw'd betther stuff o' mi own, beaut larnin, so aw'd little intherest in his talk. He showed me heaw to play th' fiddle, to be sure, an' that's summat to thank him for. So for mony a year aw wondher't an' studied what were t' matther wi me, but could ne'er find eaut whol aw geet to be nearly eighteen year owd an' went one Sunday neet to a Wesleyan sarvice at Littleborough."

Thribble, treble.

Esther looked up wi a flush. "Were it that day we first went together? Tha smiles! Aw do believe it were!"

"That very day, Esther. Tha knows heaw we larn't one another's hearts that neet as we walked o'er Birch Hill back toard wom. When aw left thee at th' lone end, knowin tha loved me as aw'd long done thee, some disturbance happen't among th' jumble o' music olez ringin i' mi ears; an' no wondher, for th' world itsel were turn't o'er for me, an' sich a shinin road ov happiness oppen't afore mi feet as aw'd hardly dar'd to hope for. Iv tha remembers we'd bin singin that owd hymn.

"The Lord my pasture shall prepare,"

to a dull ramblin mak ov a tune 'at took o sense an' feelin eaut o' th' poethry. Well, as aw walked on wom bi mysel afther levin thee, brimmin o'er wi happy feelins, aw began singin that hymn o'er again. Aw'd finished one verse an' started ov another when summat stopped me o in a minute, 'What tune's that?' aw said to mysel. 'It's noane yon reaundabeaut thing we'n had at th' sarvice. Where have aw yerd it?' So aw hummed it through again, puzzl't yet, took it wi me to bed beaut gettin nearer, whistl't it again next mornin, sang it awhile at mi loom, an' felt sure at last that tune were mine an' nobry else's. Aw geet mi fiddle to it that neet, puttin tuthri chords together to fit as weel as aw could make 'em, but fund aw knew little or nowt abeaut harmony, an' could nobbut thrust to mi ear to keep me reet. Heawever, aw copied mi tune eaut as weel as aw could, an' never seed owt prattier i' th world nor that bit ov ink-daubed papper, nobbut thy face."

"Ah, to be sure!" Esther laughed. "Tha mun flatther me up neaw tha's getten me tee'd fast. So tha reckons it were me 'at set thee off?"

"Tha has it neaw just as it happen't," James said, bendin to kiss her rose-colour't cheek as hoo sit on a stoo at his feet. "Reckon it up for thysel. So aw turn't to at studyin thoroughbass fro owd Isaac. There's no books to be getten here, tha knows, beaut spendin a dyel o' brass. Aw'd to do beaut, larnin o th' owd chap could tell me—noane so mich happen—bi word o' meauth, an' piecin t'other eaut for mysel. Aw kept writin fresh tunes, an' petchin at 'em o'er an' o'er again whol they geet summat like into shape; an' so aw've gwone on ever sin', an' shall do longer yet. But there's olez this thought to bother mi mind—Con it be possible for me, James Leach, a poor ignorant chap born here i' Wardle, to tak a place among thoose greight folk 'at con make music live for hundhreds o' years?"

"Why shouldn't it be? They're born somewheere, iv not i' Wardle, an' happen iv we nobbut knew 'em they're noane so different fro common folk. Thoose tunes 'll get sung as soon as they're known, aw'm satisfied o' that."

"But will they last?" says deaubtin James. "Is there ony life in 'em? Where will they be in a hundherd year fro neaw?"

"Don't look so far forrad, Jimmy," th' wife said. "An' have moore faith i' thysel, do! Who is there abeaut here 'at con make tunes up beside thee! Owd Isaac hissel couldn't do it!"

James laughed at that woman's logic. "Tha reminds me o' little Ben, Esther. He wanted me to engage his wife for that concert aw gav last year at Rachda, so he kept givin me sly hints abeaut her cliverness. Aw'd hearken't her singin oft enough to know hoo were nobbut very middlin at th' best, an' Ben knew weel enough aw'd yerd her; but he oather forgeet aw were able to judge, or else his anxiety to have her at th' concert made him blint to common sense. 'James,' he'd say, 'there's an owd chap at Smobridge 'at's yerd o th' big singers there is goin, an' he says wi a bit o' practice my wife could ston up wi th' best on 'em.' Or he'd co in to tell me hoo'd bin singin at a tayparty, an' when her song were o'er some woman had getten up crying, an' said, 'Eh, folk, that *is* nice! Iv aw'd sich a voice aw could sing afore King George hissel! It's enough to fot tears eaut ov a stwon!" Tha sees, it o depends on t' standhard we wanten to fix. Iv it were a question ov who could write th' best music i' Wardle aw could onswer it soon, becose aw'm th' only chap 'at writes; but th' puzzle is, con James Leach compose music *good in itsel*, fit to be takken onywheere stonnin on it own feet, wick enough to live, sthrong enough to last? Onswer me that!"

But Esther couldn't do so. Nobbut time could sattle that point, so bi way o' givin time a shove forrad James made tuthri copies o' what he thought were some ov his best tunes an' had 'em thried o'er next time he geet a band an' chorus together.

Isaac were playin th' first fiddle that neet, as he would do sometimes in a condescendin way. "There's some new psalm tunes here aw want runnin o'er," James said to him as iv nowt were. "There's one here i' D major—we'll start wi that." An' th' young composer honded his copies reaund, wondherin what o thoose chaps an' women ud think iv they knew he'd made that tune hissel, walkin whom bi starleet afther his first sweetheartin expedition.

Th' fiddlers sawed his piece through tuthri times whol th' singers geet howd on it; then James took his stond, started 'em off a fair mark, an' yerd th' full effect ov his long-studied wark for th' first time. But in his humble, self-deaubtin mind he felt moore bother't nor plez't, for his music had com'n to be so mich a part ov hissel 'at he could no moore tell t' thrue quality on it nor fly. He could nobbut wondher wi a tinge o' sadness, "Is it good, or am aw makin a foo o' mysel?"

Stwon, stone.

Th' performers were less puzzl't to make their minds up. They broke into one sheaut o' praise, an' would have th' hymn o'er again o through. So James humour't 'em, an' again th' singers seed green fields spreadin reaund an' yerd wandherin brooks murmur past, undher t' magic o' that slow-windin rustic melody sung at so mony theausand camp-meetins sin :

"The Lord my pasture shall prepare,
And feed me with a shepherd's care ;
His presence shall my wants supply,
And guard me with a watchful eye ;
My noonday walks He shall attend,
And all my midnight hours defend.

When in the sultry glebe I faint,
Or on the thirsty mountains pant,
To fertile vales and dewy meads
My weary, wand'ring steps He leads,
Where peaceful rivers, soft and slow,
Amid the verdant landscape flow."

"Where hast let o' this, Jimmy?" Isaac axed, as he rosined his bow ready for a fresh start. "'Pastoral' it's co'd, is it? It's pratty—very simple, like, but sweet—an shuits Doddhridge's words wery weel. Is it Boyce or Croft?"

"Aw'll tell yo dhirectly," says James, puttin th' owd brid off. "There's another on 'em here."

He passed reaund his neaw weel-known "Townhead," a model of unstudied beauty, followin on wi "Shepherd's Lover," an' bi that time everybody i' th' reawm felt they'd let on a new composer, wi some weft abeaut him.

"Whose are they, lad?" Isaac axed again, pooin his long white curls wi impatience. "Come, eaut wi it! Nobry's ony need to be sham't ov ownin sich music as this."

Few young fellahs stonnin i' James's shoon could ha refused claimin th' honour justly belongin to him. Every e'e rested on his flushed, deawn-kest face, th' preaud minute he'd long looked forrad to had com'n, his music had made it mark, wi a word he could cover hissel wi lastin credit, an' his wife sit theere waitin an' hopin for that word to come. But James Leach were noane cut fro common stuff. He carried moore modesty nor ambition abeaut him, an' stood too far below his own standhard o' merit to care for catchin chep glory fro folk less qualified to judge.

So he whisper't Isaac to wait a bit, looked at his wife wi th' owd smile hoo undherstood so weel, co'd his little army to ordher, and pushed forrad wi th' practice, makin up for lost time. Th' saycret were kept tuthri week longer, an' his tunes were ringin o reaund th' neighbourhood afore moore nor hawve a dozen folk knew who'd written 'em.

But he'd to tell Isaac that neet, for th' owd chap followed him wom an' wouldn't budge whol he knew. James plagued him

a while, an' then brought onto th' table a box he kept his threasures in, showin rough copies o' th' tunes they'd practised, wi mony another fine bit o' music yet to be thried.

"Neaw, Isaac; whose writin's this?"

"Oh, it's thy writin," Isaac says, turnin th' pappers o'er in his thin fingers, lissom wi fifty year o' fiddle an flute playin. "Aw know that mich, or should do afther o th' exercises aw've made thee scrat deawn. But where hasta copied 'em fro? Theyr'e noane Handel's, aw think—th' harmony's noane full enough."

"There's no copies nobbut them," James said quietly. "Aw've put 'em together eaut o' mi own yead."

Isaac olez said it took middlin to surprise him i' th' music line, but he looked capped enough for once, sittin so witbegwone at' Esther went laughin to fan him back to life wi her apron.

"This is a bad job, Jimmy," he said at last. "A very bad job! Missis! yo mun persuade him to give o'er o' this mak."

"Nay, aw never shall," Esther said. "He's noane so mony joys i' life 'at aw con afford to rob him o' th' biggest."

"It'll do noane," Isaac grumbl't. "It'll never do i' th' world! Jimmy, aw've olez bin freeten't on thee gettin consayted, an' neaw tha shows it some bowdly!"

"Done yo co my Jim consayted?" Esther axed, wi less respect for Isaac nor ever hoo'd felt afore. "Why, yo foolish owd chap, there's nobry thinks less ov hissel——"

James put his finger up, stoppin her, an' Isaac rambl't on.

"Tha doesn't undherston him, lass, same as me. Aw've larn't him o he knows, an' olez charged him to mind for gettin too mich opinion ov hissel. He's welly fit neaw to come afther me an' tak my place when aw've finished wi it, an' what finer position could a chap howd? There's plenty betther paid shops, it's thrue; but find me one 'at needs a gradely musicianer as ill, or thries up his knowledge as hard. There isn't one i' Englan! Not th' odd un! Surelee tha should be satisfied wi sich a chance as that! Why, bless thee, lad, aw never made a tune i' mi life, an' aw never larn't thee to do noather!"

"Nowe, yo ne'er larn't me that, owd friend," James says, with a sly kindly look at him. "But they didn't sing amiss, aw thought?"

"Nay, they'll pass," Isaac owned. "But let's ha no moore on 'em, dunnot! It's a lowerin to a conducthor."

Heawever, there were moore on 'em to come, spite of Isaac's advice; an' wherever they went they tarried, for folk couldn't get 'em eaut o' their yeads once they'd slipped in.

In a year or two Leach's psalm-tunes were ringin i' every chapel an cottage reaund abeaut. Far-larn't musicians turned their noses up at 'em rayther, sayin th' harmonies were poor an' thin, full o'

consecutive fifths an' false relations, though some o' th' melodies had a touch o' peawer an' a plaintive beauty o' their own not olez fund i' moore correct writins. Folk i' general ne'er bother't their yeads sortin th' tunes eaut bi rule that road, but just sang 'em wi o their hearts an' sthrength o' wynt. Most o' th' airs want hearty singers, for they're set weel up th' scale (happen becose James had a hee-pitched voice hissel), findin t' thribbles plenty o' wark to tackle 'em.

"Rochdale," "Melody," "Oldham," "Wrestling Jacob," "Pisgah," "Sabbath," "Mount Pleasant," "Middleton," "Nativity," an' a score moore pieces were soon as weel known reaund th' Wardle hills as th' owd song tunes honded fro fayther to son deawn mony a generation. Th' music had a Wardle taste in it some road, smelt o' th' moorends, belonged to th' clod just as mich as daisies or yeth-bloom grooin theere; an' singers took to it—consecutive fifths, wake modulations, false relations an' o—feelin there *were* sthrong relationship somewheere, false or not, between thoose sweet saddish sthrains an' their own deepest thoughts.

So Leach's name spread wide o'er this end o' Lancashire, music takkin up moore an' moore ov his time as months went on. Everybody looked up to him as a musician born; but thoughtful, self-watchin James nobbut studied hissel deeper th' moore praise he geet, thinkin less nor ever ov his rare gifts, an' (accordin to Isaac) grooin moore consayted every day.

V.

Nobry could expect o th' Wardle music folk to be as ploddin an' yearnest-minded as James hissel were. There were middlin o' gam at some o' th' practices, th' young conducthor's patience oft gettin pushed to th' far end. O maks ov accidents stopped his fiddlers an' pipers fro turnin up o at one time, so he'd to shift as weel as he could, makin th' best ov everything, knowin weel enough 'at music were nobbut a pastime for his band an' chorus, sayrious as it looked to hissel. Singers an' players could mostly be depended on for th' public performances, but practice meetins had to tak their chance, gettin a good or bad show o' performers, just as things let.

James geet it into his yead one day to tackle "Israel in Egypt," gav special notice to o th' music-likin folk near enough to come, went to middlin expense i' buyin an' writin copies, borrowed th' Wesleyan meetin reawm, an' fixed a Sethurday neet for a full practice.

When th' time coome Leach were theere, wi his music o ready, two rows o' red-cheeked lasses footed up, an' tuthri chaps wandher't in, some to play, some to sing.

"We'll be shappin to make a start iv yo'n a mind," James said, afther waitin a while for some late scholars. "Billy's missin as usal—has onybody sin him?"

"He's happen built hissel in somewheere," said a big bass singer known as Stamper. "Last week he were finishin a pig-cote off, stonnin inside it whol his mates roofed it in wi two heavy flags, an' it were nobbut just as t' second flag were dhroppin he fund eaut there'd bin no durhole left; so he'd to creep o'er th' wole to get hissel eaut."

"He's bin off his wark o day," says Ned o' Ted's, one o James's relations, an' a singer bi consequence. "He'll bi fuddlin i' some nook or another."

"It's no good a waitin for *him* iv that's it," James went on. "Where's o th' tenors getten to again? There's like nowt but bother wi tenors, an' as for dependin on 'em one met just as weel whistle."

"There's some on 'em gwone up Shore moor to th' Blue Pots spring," said a clarionet player co'd Stansfielt. "Aw seed Robin o' Jone's an' three moore startin soon afther noon. There's a knurr and spell match up theere to-day."

"Surelee they met ha bin back afore neaw," James said, raythe nettl't. "Iv th' heaunds are eaut Robin 'll be afther 'em, aw reckon, shuz heaw th' music gwoes on. It's too bad is this!"

"Aw yerd summat abeaut a cockfeight comin off toard Shore," says Ned. "Iv that's th' case tha may give yon lot up for to-neet."

Th' dur oppen't, lettin in a steaut little chap carryin a wisket full o' fiddle chips i' one hond, whol he balanced th' back-bwon ov a double-bass on his shooldher wi t' other. He marched forrad, stonnin like a Dirty Bet in a pace-eggin party, dhrops o' weet fro his jacket an' breeches splashin onto th' chamber floor, makin a ring o reaund him.

There were sich a crack o' laughin 'at nobry could speighk for a minute, an' th' new-comer were noane mich plez't by it.

"What are yo foos laughin at?" he axed, sceawlin at 'em o reaund. "Iv a chap geet dhreawn't yo'd nobbut make a joke on it. Laych, aw've brought thi big fiddle wom."

"Aw see tha has, Stott. It's summat fresh to find one carried in a basket."

"Well, aw cawn't help it, lad. It's o owin to yon bit ov a plank at' reckons to be a bridge o'er th' brook. Mi foot slipped on it, so deawn aw went wi th' fiddle underneighth, an' it looks to ha dinged th' frame a bit."

"Ah, it's raythe dinged for sure," James said. "Rear thi timber i' yon corner. It may do for mendin clog-soles wi, but he'll be a cliver player 'at ever fiddles on it again. This is beaun to be a rare practice aw con see!"

Stott sided away his firewood, sittin deawn among th' singers as he'd nowt to play on, an' James made a start o' th' greight choruses.

In a while a gawmless-lookin young chap wandher't into th' reawm, blinkin as iv his seet were dull. T' first thing he did were to fo o'er a bucket o' dirty wayther left bi a woman 'at 'd bin weshin th' floor, bangin deawn full length into a river o' suds.

"Eh! he'll be kilt," a woman skriked.

"Not he!" Ned says, laughin. "It's Robin o' Jone's—he's fund t' Blue Pots wayther too sthrong for him."

They gether't Robin up, wiped him wi a dishcleaut, set him on a form again th' wole, wheere he soon fell asleep, an' then th' practisin went forrad again. Th' choir nobbut framed badly, as th' music were new to 'em an' hard to sing, so th' conducthor fund his job taydious enough. When they stopped for th' neet Stamper went up to James wi his music paper, axin

"Heaw does this goo, Jimmy? Aw wish tha'd just sing it o'er for me—th' time's a bit crossed theere."

James hummed th' passage o'er, an' Stamper says,

"Oh ah! Aw see it neaw! Aw mun keep countin th' time as aw go on, an' then aw con maisther it. Just gie me th' pitch, an' hearken!"

So James gave him th' pitch in a sweet alto note, an' Stamper, oppenin a meauth like a baker's oon, set up a roar deawn among th' bass.

"The horse (two, three) an' his ridher (one)—the horse (two, three) an' his ridher (one). Come, aw'm gettin into it nicely neaw. Aw'll just thry once again."

Th' terrible din wakken't Robin o' Jone's, an' as Stamper's meauth were turn't i' that misguided young chap's direction, th' seet an' seaund together were enough to freeten him eaut ov his wits.

"Iv he does that again aw'll cob this in his chops," Robin mutther't, layin houd o' th' dishcleaut 'at 'd bin left on th' form near him.

"The horse (two, three) an' his ri——," Stamper roared, when soss coome th' squozzen cleaut fair between his sthretched jaws. He made one sthride across th' floor, but were too lat; for Robin had flown, sober enough bi then to know his neck were i' danger.

"Dun yo co this nice music, Mister Laych?" th' first soprano axed on her road eaut.

"Nice!" says James, a bit takken on. "It's grand enough—aw know nowt abeaut nice. What's amiss wi it?"

"There's like nowt mich for me to do. Aw'm noane sure whether aw con come to th' performance or not."

Soss, souse.

"Come to plez me, that's a good lass, an' we'll thry to choose thee summat tha con show off in next time. Why, these are some o' th' greightest choruses ever written!"

"Happen they are," th' soprano said, lookin no happier for that news, "but yo cawn't expect *me* to rack mi voice up wi chorus singin. Heaw would it be to put a song or two in fro summat else?"

"Nay! we'll lev th' piece as it is."

"Well, it's too taydious for me," th' soprano snapped. "It's mich iv aw con make time to come."

Hoo flutther't off disgusted, an' one o' th' tenors went up to James.

"Laych," he says, "there con be no music written i' seven flats, con there?"

"To be sure—or fourteen oather."

"Tha'rt makin gam on me, aw think. Why there's nobbut seven notes to th' scale, an' surelee they cawn't o be flat at once!"

So James scrawl't tuthri major an' minor scales deawn to show th' tenor heaw t' thrick were done, axin iv that satisfied him; an' th' chap said he could gawm it reet enough, but were hardly satisfied, becose he'd lost a quart ov ale o'er th' job.

Ned o' Ted's had bin hearkenin this bit ov a music lesson.

"Gabriel," he says to th' tenor, a thick-set young quarryman fro Whitoth, "tha reminds me o' what Curly said to th' bull."

"What were that?"

"Curly plays a thrombone i' th' Dyearnley band, tha knows. He were makin for wom one neet afther practisin, an' blew a deep note on his thrumpet just for company like. Another note, summat th' same, seaunded behinnd him, so, thinkin one ov his mates were comin, he sheauts, beaut lookin reaund, 'Thar't flat—an' aboon a bit, too!'"

"Next minute he felt hissel cobbed o'er th' hedge, londin hawve road up a broo-side, an' lookin deawn he seed a big bull snookin abeaut among th' wicksets.

"Oh!" he says. "It's thee! Well, tha may be sthrong i' th' back, but tha'rt no musicianer!"

"Neaw come!" Gabriel said, laughin. "Tha cawn't expect us o to be music-bred like yo Layches. But aw ne'er put swop into th' singers' ale same as thee."

"Howd on!" Ned says, makin off. "Tha has me this time —aw'm soory aw spoke."

"Is that some prank o' Ned's tha'rt talkin abeaut?" James axed as he collected his books an' pappers.

"Ah, it were at th' last Norden sing," Gabriel said, chucklin as he talked. "Yor Ned an' me went. Nanny o' th' Steps had made a special brewin ov ale for th' singers, an' left it coolin in a

doaf mug. Ned went to wesh his honds, leet th' swop fo slap into th' liquor, an' could'nt get it eaut afore it melted, so when th' ale coome to be supped there were some sport. One said it felt weel-lythed, another thought there were too mony hops in, an' noane on 'em seemed to matther it so mich. Nanny said their meauths mut be eaut o' fettle, as there could be nowt amiss wi th' brewin, but hoo'd most o' th' ale left on her honds at th' finish. Aw'd noticed Ned wouldn't sup, but iv aw'd known everything he should ha done, for aw'd a tem'd a pint or two into him."

"Tha looks weary, Jimmy lad," Stansfielt said, helpin t' conducthor to gether his music up. "It's bin rough for thee to-neet."

"It has for sure! Tha's bin to London, aw yer, sin aw seed thee last?"

"Aw have—but never no moore!"

"Why, heaw's that. It's a grand shop, isn't it, wi o th' fine heauses, big shops, silk-donned chaps, women wi petches on their cheeks, ridin cheers, rogues, an' flyin slutch?"

"Tha does weel to put rogues in. Aw co'd at a coffee-heause to get some dinner, an' let across two rare uns. First they talked o'er t' weather, then they axed me iv aw were a native, an' next wanted to know mi arrand. Aw towd 'em one o' mi jobs were to buy a clarionet, an' sthrange to say that were just what they'd getten i' hond theirsel, for they bwoth wanted clarionets. So they agreed 'at th' best plan ud be for us o to put eaur brass together an' let one chap buy th' pipes, as they'd come cheper that road. Their tale seaunded rezonable so far, but when one offer't to be th' buyer, an' axed me for some brass, aw dhrew eaut o' partnership."

"A good job too! Tha'd ne'er ha sin thi brass again."

"Oh nowe! but we're hardly simple enough i' Wardle to be robbed wakken that road. Aw'd to show 'em mi clogs afore they'd goo. Hast ever bin to th' Opera when tha's gwone o'er?"

"Once or twice. There's summat like music to be yerd theere."

"Aw darsay. Aw went one neet, but cawn't say aw'm mich intheristed in it. Aw squoze mysel in just behinnd th' first clarionet player, an' watched him o th' time. He noticed me leighnin o'er to peep at his book, so when he'd finished he turned to ax iv aw played mysel. 'Just a bit,' aw said, 'but aw notice *yo* don't play o 'at's i' yor copy.'"

"That were a middlin hardish rap," James said, laughin.

"It were thrue enough, shuzheaw. 'No, my vrient,' he says, talking some mak o' tongue-teed English; 'nor you could not play him too.' 'Play him two,' aw said; 'nowe, but aw con play him one bi mysel iv aw mun have elbow-reawm an' a pint o' wom-brewed.' Th' upshot were he took me behinnd th' stage to

Doaf, dough.

get some supper wi th' band, an' afther that geet me on playin. Aw made some on em' oppen their e'en, Jimmy, iv tha con believe me."

"Aw con believe weel enough, for aw know what tha con do."

"They offer't me a shop at three peaund a week, shuzheaw 't be, so aw mun ha plez't 'em. 'Ger off!' aw said. 'Aw'm addlin fifteen shillin a week i' bonny Wardle, where aw've a wife an' three childher to keep. Aw cawn't lev wom.'"

"It looks a pity to miss sich a chance as that, too," James said, thinkin it o'er. "Aw'd goo iv aw were thee."

"*Aw* wain't," says Stansfielt. "Aw'm satisfied here, an' myen stoppin; so good neet to thee."

James wished him good neet, an' walked toard wom, studyin o'er what Stansfielt had said, an' wondherin iv he'd getten sich a chance hissel what it met have ended in.

His sisther stood at th' fowt end wi a shawl o'er her yead.

"Han yo finished, Jimmy?"

"Just finished; an' a weary job it's bin for some on us."

"Has Billy gwone wom?"

"Aw've sin nowt on him to-neet, Mary. It's no use reckonin to depend on him."

"He promised to co to-neet," Mary said, puttin her brat to her e'en. 'Eh! aw wondher wherever he is! It's noane th' first time he's made a foo on me this road, but happen it'll be th' last."

"Well, well!" James said, soothin her. "Don't make too mich on it, lass. Billy's a bit carless, but he's a weel-myenin lad, an' he'll sattle deawn when yo getten wed."

"He'll wed noane o' me whol he shows some awtheration, an' tha con tell him aw say so."

"Nay! aw'll meddle noane between sweethearts. Get thisel to bed an' think no moore on it; he'll be turnin up to-morn feelin asham't ov hissel."

What had becom'n o' this quare Billy, 'at everybody wanted an' nobry could find. He'd gwone to Smobridge that mornin, persuadin hissel he'd some business theere, fund there were a thrail hunt to be run at Belfielt, an' scutther't off wot-foot to see it, soon forgettin band practice, cwortin, an' everything belongin to Wardle. He lost some brass wi bettin on th' race, set off to get wom bi baggin time, stopped to get just one gill on th' road, an' stirred no moore whol midneet. When at last he turn't up th' owd lone toard wom, his legs, happen a bit mad at havin to wait for him so long, started roamin abeaut i' o directions.

"What hast agate, tha numb thing?" Billy axed ov his reet shank, feelin at it to make sure it belonged him. "It's o thy doin —t'other side's stiddy enough. Behave thisel, an come this road, or aw'll hop wom an carry thee. Woa, mi lads, an' mind fro fo'in!

Yon's heavy ale—it's o flown to mi heels. This road wants levellin some ill—it's noane plumb."

He flopped into th' ditch next minute, thryin to steer hissel reaund a bend, an' crawl't eaut levin his cap behinnd him.

"Thaghyer!" he said to his independent feet. "Aw knew heaw it 'd be! Happen yo'll larn wit sometime, yo wandherin beggars! What yo mun keep aimin at Blacksnedge for aw cawn't tell, but aw'm gooin noane theere to-neet; so tak that fro Billy an' be hanged to yo! It's lucky there's a saup o' moonleet! Eh, Mally, aw do love thee! Heaw the hangment did yon black dog shap to win? Aw durst a backed th' brindl't bitch for a theausand peaund, an' that's a full week's wage. Shine away owd bluebell! Aw'm lookin at thee, wi thi pratty childher winkin deawn at Billy."

Wi sichlike maundherin talk th' muddl't mason crawl't on to Wardle.

"Aw'm th' last chap eaut to-neet, aw do believe, but it wouldn't do for us o to be i' bed at once. Ah, it's my turn! Yon's Mary's window wi th' moon peepin through. Bi th' mass! hoo'd be expectin me to-neet! Or were it to-morn aw promised to goo? Aw'll be hanged iv aw con tell to a day! Howd on! Aw'll sattle it neaw!"

He turned off th' road into a croft, crept undher Mary's window, an' started singin, inspired bi love an' ale.

"Iv aw were a posy i' gardens to groo,
Aw'd wait for me thrue love (hic) mi blossoms to poo;
Iv aw wur a rindlet deawn th' hillside to run,
Aw'd chatther (hic) mi love-tale whol t' wayther were done;
But here aw've to wortch wi mi honds an' mi feet,
An' so (hic) mi own thrue love's oft eaut o' mi seet;
But aw'll sattle this job in a sensible way (hic),
For aw'll tak her an wed her some mornin i' May.
Foldherdol laddy!
Foldher (hic) dol laddy!
Foldherdol oldherdol oldherdol lay!"

Mary, frettin, wakken i' bed, yerd this fine performance.

"Eh, yon foolish lad!" hoo thought, creepin to th' window to peep at her chap. Throubl't as hoo were th' poor lass could hardly howd fro laughin to see him makin a desperate sthruggle to ston sthraight, his flushed face turn't up toard her, his heavy tongue muttherin away some mak o' love-born saycrets to his own dull ears.

"Aw mun send him wom," Mary whisper't, lappin hersel up, her woman's heart meltin wi pity. "There's no tellin heaw long he'll tarry theere iv aw don't."

Hoo poo'd th' window back, put her pratty yead eaut, an' said, "Billy!" in a soft voice.

"Hoo's theere!" Billy said, an' forgettin to balance hissel he sit deawn wi a sudden thump on th' damp grass. "It's her! That's heaw angels mun look through th' shinin quarrels ov heaven's windows! Mally, aw've com'n a cwortin."

"Do go wom," Mary said. "Tha'll catch thi dyeath o' cowd, aw'm sure. Eh, Billy! what a dhreadful state th'art in! an' where's thi cap?"

"There's no tellin," Billy says, feelin at his yead an' findin nowt but slutch-daubed yure. "Aw had it a bit sin' aw think. That accounts for mi brains feelin so leet happen. Bless thee! mi bonny lass! Aw've bin thinkin o'er thee o day."

"Aw've bin thinkin o' thee, too, moore nor a little. Where hasta bin?"

"It's o yon dogs."

"Dogs!" Mary said wi scorn. "That's another word for lies wi thee! Go wom, neaw!"

"Nowe, aw wain't, whol tha gies o'er flytin. Save that mak o' talk whol we getten wed."

"Wed! Nay, aw'll wed noane wi a dhrunken chap!"

"Aw'll bet a bodle tha doesn't," Billy maundher't, talkin very thick. "Aw'll stop that gam bi weddin thee mysel. Aw promised to co to-neet, tha knows, so aw've com'n."

"Go to bed, do," Mary said, her heart fair wartchin for him. "Do go, my lad! Aw'll see thee to-morn."

"Aw deaubt tha will! There's throuble brewin for Billy, an' that's a sort o' wom-brewed he reckons nowt on. Go wom, saysta? Aw'll go deawn to th' brook an' end it! If tha con use a sweetheart this road tha'll make a husbant beaunce, aw'll warrand!"

He climbed onto his feet wi a dyel o' throuble, Mary lookin at him wi tears in her e'en.

"Good neet," th' mason co'd eaut, staggerin off. "O's o'er between us neaw! Good neet, lass! Aw'm soory for thee; but a flytin wife wain't do for Billy."

He rambl't off reaund th' corner toard wom.

"What weary wark!" Mary sighed, hearkenin to th' seaund ov his clumsy feet a minute. "Whatever con aw do wi sich a random customer as yon!"

Clunther, clunther, went Billy's clogs on th' stony throd. Mary yerd him sthrike up a tuneless

"Foldherdol oldherdol lay."

as he went, disturbin th' still neet. Laughin to hersel, i' spite ov her throubl't mind, hoo shut her window an' crept back into bed.

Quarrels, window-panes. *Flytin*, scolding.

VI.

When John Leach took his weel-loved maisther, Wesley, to preighch at Wardle, in th' spring o' 1788, eaur young composer were theere conductin a big chorus o' singers, bringin eaut some new tunes to do honour to th' greight occasion. Sich creawds o' folk coome 'at ony thought o' squeezin 'em inside a buildin were eawt ov o question; so Wesley, bare-yeaded, wearin his black geawn an' brode white tie, marched afore 'em to th' moorside, takkin his ston theere wi his flock gether't below an' above him.

"My brethren," he said then, "it is not unfitting that, like the faithful people of old time, we should assemble before God unscreened save by the hollow dome of heaven. Before we kneel in prayer upon this green earth let us join in a song of reverent praise."

Wesley's hymns were some twelve year owd then, an' weel known through o t' counthry. Wesley, in his thravellin abeaut, had yerd 'em sung o maks o' roads to o sorts o' tunes; but his heart stirred wi new an' deep feelins, quiet as he stood theere, when hundherds o' voices broke into one ov his brother Charles's fine hymns, new-set bi Leach to a bowd dignified melody co'd "New Trumpet."

"Blow ye the trumpet, blow,
The gladly solemn sound,
Let all the nations know
To earth's remotest bound;
The year of Jubilee is come!
Return, ye ransomed sinners, home.

. . . . . .

Ye who have sold for nought
Your heritage above,
Receive it back unbought,
The gift of Jesu's love;
The year of Jubilee is come!
Return, ye ransomed sinners, home.

The gospel trumpet hear,
The news of heavenly grace,
And, saved from earth, appear
Before your Saviour's face:
The year of Jubilee is come!
Return, ye ransomed sinners, home."

Moore an' moore voices kept joinin in as th' hymn went on, whol at th' last verse nearly every tongue theere were busy, an' a full chorus o' thrillin seaund went rowlin away up th' slantin moorside as iv makin sthraight for heaven.

Wesley preighched a sarmon that day 'at most o' th' folk hearkenin ne'er forgeet whol they lived. He'd no thricks o' stile abeaut his talkin; everything were plain, simple, full o' weight an'

wit. He wasted no time wavin his arms abeaut, turnin his e'en up, speautin hee-flown gush; he stood still, just liftin his reet hond once or twice, looked folk square i' th' e'en, spoke nowt but what he felt in his heart to be good an' reet. Wi less fire nor Blair, Whitefield, or Robertson, his deeper inseet into human nathur gav him full as mich peawer to stir a congregation, his words gainin sthrength fro everybody's knowledge ov his honest, sincere, hard-wortchin, monly life. Ah! *that* were one greight saycret o' Wesley's peawer. He were a MON first an' a parson afther, actin up to his beliefs, an' never advisin onybody to do owt beaut doin it hissel.

His clear voice rang across th' hillside, his steady e'en shin't wi courage an' love, his weel-set figure stood sthraight an' firm for justice an' liberty. No mon were he to be throttl't wi' form or dogma, no cantin heaunt to preighch lies for brass, no tongue-tee'd cowart freeten't to say what he thought. He co'd every mon brother, myenin what he said, were content wi a crust when nowt better offer't, gav o his sthrength, soul, an' worldly goods for God's wark, an' he'd ha gien his life too sanner nor foot back a single inch fro th' mark he'd set for hissel.

Th' sarvice finished wi th' favourite hymn,

> "Lo! He comes with clouds descending,
> Once for favoured sinners slain,"

an' James had another piece ready for it—his "Judgment," a fine sample ov his maistherly hondlin an' clen swing o' tune.

Then Wesley, spreadin his arms, blessed that greight kneelin creawd o' good an' bad, an' sent 'em o off to their own woms. When o were quiet again he didn't forget to ax John Leach where they fund sich grand psalm tunes.

"We make our own, sir," John towd him wi pride. "The tunes you have heard this morning were written by one of my nephews, who has a natural genius for music. I will fetch him, for the lad is too shy to come himself."

So he sorted James eaut, an' took him to wheere Wesley were stonnin at th' hill-foot, an' they o three walked on together toard th' meetin-reawm, wheere th' parsons had some business to sattle.

"Here is our James, Mr. Wesley," says John, so th' famous preighcher shook honds wi th' composer, takkin in wi one keen look young Leach's wide, thoughtful foryead, big, weel-shaped honds, an' honsome, sthraight-cut face, let up bi dark e'en ov a depth nobbut fund i' th' yeads o' folk able to see theirsel bwoth inside an' eaut. "This is the most talented man of all the gifted Leach family—one likely to be heard of when all the rest are forgotten."

"Nonsense!" James laughed. "Yo shouldn't roose me to mi face, uncle John."

Roose, praise.

"I have to thank you for affording me great and peculiar pleasure, my young friend," Wesley said. "It is gratifying indeed to find my dear Charles's verses clothed in music of so much power and beauty."

"Aw've done mi best," said James, feelin ashamed ov hissel becose his wark were no betther, "but aw'm nobbut a very ignorant chap, gropin mi road into music-lond as weel as aw con."

"You are modest, brother," Wesley said, wi a twitch ov his lip 'at happen myen't he hadn't fund that virtue too common among music folk. "Do not hold to low an estimate of your ability."

James shook his yead. "Aw con judge what's good or bad in other folk's music, but not i' mi own. Bi th' time aw've finished polishin an' petchin a tune it's getten so melted an' mixed into mi brains 'at aw cawn't ston o' one side an' weigh justly whot it's woth. Aw could as soon reckon up my own vally, an' yo known what a simpleton a chap makes ov hissel when he thries that."

"You speak words of truth and soberness," Wesley said, "and put into forcible language a peculiarity of the mind which I have often experienced myself."

"It's just here, done yo see," James went on, oppenin o his heart undher t' leet o' thoose clear e'en. "There's so mony rules to larn 'at one may study o his life beaut gettin larn't up; an' aw've olez bin short ov a good teighcher, beside. Aw've been thinkin aw'd get some college-thrained professor to help mi eaut with th' harmonies."

Wesley looked as iv he were findin th' young composer to be a curious an' intheristin study, an' thried him wi a seechin question, just to see what onswer he'd get.

"If you do that it must follow that the tunes can no longer be considered wholly your own."

"That's thrue enough," says James, flushin up, for th' parson were divin deep into his saycrets. "Aw've thought o' that some oft, an' it's a hard thought too. But, iv aw mun eaut wi everything—an' aw'm beaun to seaund very consayted neaw—"

"I don't think you are, brother; but go on."

"Yo're like as yo con turn me inside eaut," James went on, laughin bwoth at hissel and Wesley. "Aw ne'er oppen't misel so mich afore—not even to mi wife. Heawever, what aw wanted to say were just this—iv these melodies 'at keepen comin into mi yead are woth aught, they desarven donnin i' th' best clooas aw con get for 'em; an' happen it's mi duty to give 'em that chance, whether my name dhrops eaut o' seet or not."

Wesley looked at John, smilin.

"You see how it is with him, sir," John said, onswerin his maisther's look. "James has wandered in dreamland so long, sitting in judgment over himself and his work, that self-abnegation is an easy matter for him. The lad's curious habits puzzled me

for a long time until this creative faculty declared itself and gave me the clue to his character, showing plainly that his elevated course of thought and study had helped him to build up many solid mental virtues."

"Yo'll make me think aw am somebody in a bit," says James, his mind comparin John's opinions wi his own. "Aw've naught to swagger o'er iv yo'll reckon me up reet."

That made his uncle laugh. "The spectacle of James Leach swaggering would be edifying indeed! The difficulty is to make you entertain even a moderate estimate of yourself."

"Aw know misel middlin weel, aw think," says James, deep i' thought, "an' my belief is yo're expectin too mich. Iv aw could put o aw feel into th' music it met do, but that con never happen."

"You are a man of admirable and rarely-combined qualities," Wesley said, as they poo'd up at th' fowt-end, "and I hasten to declare the fact, because your sensitive and humble mind requires encouragement from others. Take my serious advice and allow no man to meddle with your compositions. Let them spread abroad with whatever faults you may think belong to them, and be not ashamed to acknowledge them as the ripe fruit of honest and patient labour. I can myself avouch that if your works carry no college graces they have much power to stir the heart. Be of good cheer, brother, and may God spare thee long to use thy precious gift to the glory of His name."

Wi a warm hondshake th' greight preighcher an' his journeyman were gwone, levin James rayther preaud to yer his wark roosed so mich, but wi little betther opinion ov hissel nor he'd had afore.

VII.

That spring seed Billy an' Mary made mon an' wife. Young Howarth were doin weel at his business, an' he'd getten known o up an' deawn as a fine player on th' hobye. There were no need for conducthors to watch him neaw when he took his part in a band; nobry could be thruer to his time nor Billy, nobry could fot finer tone eaut of a reed, nor blow wi longer length o' wynt. Th' same carless, good-temper't lad as ever, a favourite wi o 'at knew him, he'd a curious knack o' gettin hissel into bits o' scrapes, an' this quare luck followed him on his weddin mornin, very near puttin a stop to o th' job.

It'd bin sattl't 'at th' young couple an' their relations should walk deawn to Rachda parish church to be wed, so Billy co'd at Leach's heause i' good time to fot his sweetheart an' get on th' road. He wore a blue lap jacket wi gilt buttons, a fine neck-hanketcher an' singlet, knee breeches, wom-knitted grey stockins, weel-greased shoon, an' a new cloth cap. He carried a big bunch

o' fleawers in his hond, an' his plump weather-tanned face shin't wi fresh polish fro a good rowler towel; but his good looks were a bit spoil't bi a darkish ring reaund his left e'e. Owd Leach noticed it in a minute, an' sheauted,

"What, Billy! Hast bin feightin so soon this mornin?"

"Nowe," Billy said, sharp an' short, thryin to keep his face eaut o' th' women's seet, an' wishin th' owd chap 'd howd his din.

"Why, iv he hasn't getten a black e'e!" Mrs. Leach co's eaut. "Eh, Billy! aw'd olez mi deaubts on thee doin weel."

James an' his wife were theere, waitin to join th' weddin procession, so they bwoth cracked off into a laugh, an' Mary sit her deawn cryin as iv her heart were brokken.

"Whatever hasta bin doin, lad?" James axed him.

"Aw geet it i' th' aleheause last neet," Billy said, stonnin, fleawers i' one hond, cap i' t' other, hardly darin to look at onybody. "It's noane my faurt. Two chaps were fo'in eaut, so aw parted 'em, an' one leatheryead fot me a cleaut. Aw'm olez happenin summat!"

"Well, th'art a bonny picther!" Mrs. Leach quaver't. "Tha art so! Dost think ony dacent folk 'll walk wi thee o th' road to Rachda wi thi face i' that pickle?"

"We mun put it off," Mary sobbed, dhroppin wot tears o'er her new frock. "Eh, tha foolish lad!"

"Put it off!" Billy said, sthricken. "It's no faurt o' mine aw tell yo. Laych, what han *yo* to say abeaut it?"

"Let 'em talk a while," th' owd chap said, leetin his pipe an' sittin deawn at th' hobend. "They'll come reaund when they'n finished co'in thee."

"Nowe, aw wain't!" Billy said. "Iv they were women aw cared nowt abeaut it wouldn't matther a bodle, but aw cawn't ston it fro these."

"Poo yor bonnets off, lasses," t' mother says. "There'll be no weddin to-day. Surelee tha met ha takken care o' thysel for one day, Billy."

"Han yo o done neaw?" th' mason axed, lookin reaund at 'em? "Esther, has tha nowt to say?"

"Aw've a bit o' silk here," Esther said, comin forrad. "Aw'll make a shade for that e'e an' then it'll ne'er be noticed."

"Put th' silk i' thi pocket," Billy grunted, wavin her off. "Aw'm donned up enough for one weddin, an' iv aw get a shade on aw s' want a wood leg to match it. Aw'm noane so ill-lookin 'at a black e'e con spoil me."

"Th' weddin mun wait," Mary whimper't. "Aw darn't for shame goo into th' church wi thee that figure. Eh, what foolish wark! An' o th' neighbours expectin us to start, too!"

"Hearken thee neaw to me, Mally Laych," says Billy wi th' Pipes, settin his plump shouldhers back, his face sattlin into a

determin't look. "Aw'm havin a say i' this, an' just heed what aw tell thee. Iv tha'rt th' lass aw've cworted thee for an' loved so long tha'll wipe that saut wayther fro thi e'en, tak this posy aw've brought thee to carry, an' aw'll link thee deawn to th' Owd Church an' wed thee, fast an' soon. Iv not, aw'll cob mi fleawers i' th' fire, brun mi love wi 'em, turn mi back on thee once an' for ever, an' lev thee to get a betther husbant wi two white e'en, iv tha con find one. Aw'm noane as cliver as Solomon, but it's noane thy tongue 'at should co me a foo, an' iv tha con dhrem o' settin this weddin back for another day—ah, or another heaur!—tha'rt noane th' woman aw've thrusted mi heart to. Billy Howarth wife mun feel noane asham't ov her chap—nor ov owt he does, noather—nor set ony thought ov her neighbours aboon her opinion ov him. Undherston that an' make thi mind up."

"That's reet, Billy," says th' owd chap, noddin wi satisfaction as he poo'd at his long clay. "Tha'll be t' maisther i' thi own heause, aw yer."

"Aw'll be maisther enough for quiet livin an' a comfortable hobend," Billy said, settin his teeth, "an aw'm beaun to start as aw myen gooin on. Aw'm happen rayther too fond ov ale, iv owt; but aw've ne'er stown, nor lied, nor cheted at marrables. Tha knows what aw am, Mary—if tha likes me neaw tha'll like me olez—iv tha doesn't we'll part an' tha mun go to heaven bi thisel, for it'll shuit noane o' Billy to be felleyed o'er bi his wife"

"There's bin a greight parliment mon wasted i' thee lad," James chuckl't. "Tha seldom starts talkin beaut makin a sattlement."

Billy's speech were a fettler for th' women. They'd ne'er sin him wi his back up afore, an' happen thought him a simple lad they could sauce onytime they'd a mind. Billy had made no din mich abeaut his lecturin, but it were so plain he myent every word he'd spokken 'at th' owd dame put her bonnet on again, Mary dhried her face, an' i' tuthri minutes th' procession were off deawn th' lone. So th' weddin coome off o reet, hardly onybody noticin th' black mark 'at 'd made so mich bother, an' th' party turn't toard wom as cheerful as iv nowt were.

Eautside th' little ring o' Wardle life th' greight world had kept whuzzin away at th' owd bat. A bit afore James geet wed th' Merica war finished, George Washington playin th' winnin sthroke i' that long-fought gam bi shuttin Cornwallis an' seven theausan British sodiers up i' Yorktown like wasps in a neest.

Besides this Merica job England had bits o' dusts here an' theere wi hauve-a-dozen foreign nations, olez shappin to come eaut on th' top in every wrostle. That greight law-suit again Warren Hastings started abeaut this time, when Burke, Fox, an' Sheridan made sich rare speeches. Th' case lasted seven year, levin Warren beaut brass at th' finish, but he were no wur off nor theausans o'

Lancashire folk 'at 'd to sweat for his feightin, an' help to keep him an' t'other rook o' sodiers.

Heawever, James Leach prosper't, bad as times were, an' when th' greight French Revolution started—bein groon up then to th' age o' twenty-seven—he made three bowd sthrides forrad i' th' world. First, he gav o'er weighvin, levin his loom bench wi some regrets, for he'd known mony a quiet an' happy heaur theere. Weighvin has one merit as a job for thinkin' chaps—it levs their brains free to wandher; an' eaur young musician had wovven mony a tune in his yead whol feet an' honds were busy wortchin away wi heavy shuttle an' rattlin timbers. Second, he flitted to Rachda, wi his wife an' two childher, settin up i' business as a full-blown professor o' music. Third, he published a book ov his tunes; partly becose folk kept botherin him to write copies eaut, an' partly wi a hopeful e'e toard comin fame.

Yo may be sure there'd to be a grand farewell performance afore eaur young music maker were alleawed to lev Wardle. Th' Wesleyan singin day happened to be due a fortnit afore th' flittin, so it were planned to have a special afthernoon sarvice wi James's hymns an' anthems for music. Th' aleheause attics were too little for sich a greight getherin as were expected, so th' big stone ware-heause built partly bi that rovin blade Billy Howarth were takken an' fitted up, an' when th' day coome o' th' music-likin folk fro miles reaund abeaut flocked theere wi one consent. Slendher lasses singin thribble, plump dimply lasses singin alto, steaut young tenors wi mustashes, hungry lookin clen-shaved basses, fiddlers enough, blowers o' brass an' wood pipes, cymbal an' dhrum-bangers—theere they were in a creaud, ready for ony quantity o' wark. Isaac were persuaded to play th' first fiddle, raythar again his will, for th' fine owd chap had aged sadly in th' last year or two, an' his owd skill failed him; Billy were theere wi his sweet reed, Stott wrostl't a new double-bass, Stansfielt brought his clarionet, even Robin o' Jone's had shapped to lond sober for once, an' stood beside Stamper, i' th' next row to Gabriel an Ned o' Ted's, lookin as solemn as iv he'd ne'er sin a thrail hunt or a Rachda bull-bait in his life.

James crept quietly to his place, colourin up to find hissel stared at bi so mony folk. He poo'd hissel together an' looked reaund th' big reawm, creawded to th' dur. Theere sit his owd fayther an' mother, his wife an' two little plump sons, o their faces shinin wi love; theere were dozens ov his relations, lookin on him wi pride; theere were scores ov acquaintances, an' plenty o' friends he'd ne'er sin afore, o gether't to do him honour. He turned, lookin o'er his singers an' players, smilin as his e'en ran fro row to row. Theere they were, those folk he'd spent so mony precious heaurs i' tuthorin, oft wi little to show for his patient wark—theere they were in a rook, sharp an' dull, good temper't an' bad, bowd

an' bashful, o feelin respect for their young maisther. Tuthri on 'em had bin jealous on him at times, but that ronk weed envy were kil't as it sprung bi his sthrong sense an rare talents, an' throdden witherin i' th' dust. James lifted his hond an' th' tide o' music rose an' broke i' full waves o' seaund—music at spoke fro heart to heart, *sacred* music to stir feelins o' joy an' sorrow, airs brethin wild nathural freedom an' beauty, noane thrimmed an' cropped bi rule an' fashion to one artificial level. Folk were ignorant then. Heaw were *they* to know it's coarse an' common to laugh or cry? We known betther neaw, an' con go through life wi one set refined snigger, usin hee-flown language, feelin little, an' freeten't o' lettin even that little be sin.

Th' sarvice, filled eaut wi prayers, Bible readins, an' singin, coome to it end. For th' last hymn James had written a new tune co'd "Travelling," neaw weel known.

"Leader of faithful souls, and Guide
Of all that travel to the sky,
Come and with us, even us, abide,
Who would on thee alone rely;
On thee alone our spirits stay,
While held in life's uneven way.

Strangers and pilgrims here below,
This earth, we know, is not our place;
But hasten through this vale of woe,
And, restless to behold Thy face,
Swift to our heavenly country move,
Our everlasting home of love.

We have no 'biding city here,
But seek a city out of sight;
Thither our steady course we steer,
Aspiring to the plains of light,
Jerusalem, the saints' abode,
Whose founder is the living God.

. . . . . .

Through Thee, who all our sins hast borne,
Freely and graciously forgiven,
With songs to Zion we return,
Contending for our native heaven;
That palace of our glorious King,
We find it nearer while we sing."

These words touched mony a heart, pointin as they did to th' young composer's lev-takkin. E'en began to fill, an' Isaac were so o'ercome 'at he laid his fiddle deawn an' fair sobbed. He sit still in his place, restin his yead on his hond, whol th' buildin were nearly empty; an' James comin up to collect some music, findin him theere, axed what were to do.

"Aw've done thee wrong, Jimmy," poor Isaac said, lookin up wi dim e'en, his long white curls hangin o'er his face. He put eaut

a thremblin hond for his pupil to grip. "Aw've done thee wrong, mi own lad! Aw con see it neaw! Tha desarves it o! Tha does, for sure! Tha's gwone again my advice, an' aw've fretted o'er it; but tha did reet, Jimmy—tha did reet!"

"Don't tak on this road," James said gently. "Nobody could ha bin kindher to me nor yo—not even mi own fayther; an' aw shan't forget yo when aw'm gwone."

"Aw know tha wain't," Isaac quaver't. "It's noane i' thi nathur to forget owd friends. 'Wi' songs to Zion we return,' does it say? Ah! but tha'll come back no moore, mi lad! Never no moore! Tha's summat moore in thee nor ever aw thought, an' tha'll be wanted i' bigger teawns nor this. Aw do believe tha were reet to turn composer, consayted as it looks for a Wardle lad to set hissel again th' greight musicianers. Aw've misjudged thee!"

"Reet or wrong aw were forced to start," James said. "Aw couldn't help it. But as for settin misel again onybody aw've no sich thought i' mi yead. Aw'm nobbut a little pipin counthry singer, an' never expect to catch th' world's ear like some; but aw'll do mi best as far as it gwoes."

"Aw've done thee wrong," Isaac said again. "Reighch mi cap, Jimmy. Wardle music's sin it best days, for tha'rt levin us an' aw'm gettin welly done."

They went eaut together, partin at th' owd fowt corner.

"God bless thee, lad," Isaac said wi th' owd womly warm-hearted words o' separation. "Tha'll soon be levin th' owd clod, an' afore so long they'll ha to lay me undher it. Aw may happen ne'er see thee again—but tha'll do weel—tha'll do weel! God bless thee!"

So they parted, an' never again did o th' owd lot o' Wardle musicians meet together to practise th' art they loved so weel.

VIII.

Neaw flittin's one thing, and publishin a book's another. For th' first yo may reckon th' expense somewheere near, an' guess summatlike what yo'll get for yor brass; as for t'other yo con tell nought abeaut it, but mun be content to aim at a blint mark, hopin yor frisky shot wain't help to lond yo i' th' sylum or warkheause.

James hadn't a dyel o' goods to shift, bein satisfied in th' simple style ov his time wi furnithur enough for use, beaut keepin ony for show. Carrier Billy's cart took 'em—goods, childher, James, an' Esther—o at one journey, londin 'em dhry an' seaund at their fresh heause. That were a simple job enough, chep, soon paid for an' done wi.

Gettin th' book eaut were noane quite as yezzy, but James fund a friend to help him through that job—sich a friend as risin

geniuses seldom meet wi—able to see th' young chap's peawers an' willin to find brass to help him up th' steep road he were sthrivin so hard to climb. As Capel Lofft ten year afther were to help Robert Bloomfield, as Gavin Hamilton three year afore had helped Robert Burns, so neaw another yet moore famous Hamilton oppen't his purse to James Leach; an' their names should olez be coupled together.

Nobry near Rachda could print music i' thoose days, so th' job were sent to London, th' finished books comin fro theere i' due time, an' soon gettin theirsel sowd off.

This first printed collection o' Leach's music, a little oblong book, sowd at four shillin. There's twenty-two psalm tunes, printed i' oppen score, some i' four, some i' six parts, an' two long anthems to finish wi, written for solo voices, full chorus, an' band. James shows his modest spirit i' th' preface, makin a sort ov apology for runnin into print:

"Having had a turn for music from my infancy, I have employed my leisure hours in cultivating the same. A few years ago I composed a few tunes, and without the least design of their being made public, being at the time ignorant of the rules of composition. These few tunes accordingly got handed about, and were introduced into many congregations, insomuch that I was called upon from all quarters for copies, so that I found myself under the disagreeable necessity of denying many requests of that kind. For having a family to maintain with my hand labour I had already spent more time than I could well spare; but a friend knowing my importunities of that kind, and wishing the tunes to be more generally known, advised me, by all means, to compose a few more select pieces, and let a number of them be struck off, as the price would be small, so that such as wished to have them might procure them at a small expense; and therefore I now submit them to the judgment of the public; *I mean such as understand music.*"

Th' sly dog's quiet humour peeps eaut i' that last line. We con see him smile as he fots th' public that friendly dig i' th' ribs, an' we're forced to admire his honest simple style o' writin, free alike fro vanity or pretence. "Ignorant of the rules of composition," says he, takkin everybody into his confidence in a way 'at proves what seaund metal he had in him. "Having a family to maintain with my hand labour." Heaw mony preface makers ud ever ha thought o' puttin that in? This is a quare style ov advertisin a new book, compar't wi th' present systems, an' makes us wondher if it were th' fashion i' thoose days for everybody to speighk thruth i' sich a sthraightforrad oppen way.

T'other day Leach's written copies o' this first collection o' tunes were put into mi honds. Aw could ha cried o'er 'em iv there hadn't been tears enough dhropped up an' deawn this blundherin histhory. Thoose bits o' time-colour't papper, cover't

i' faded ink wi James's careful painstakkin hondwritin, could say summat to us iv they'd gifts o' speech. Aw con see that tall figure bendin o'er 'em, that yearnest deep-thinkin face, thoose long 'lastic fingers busy at their wark. Soon an' late, bi mornin shine an' candle leet, were these lastin marks dotted deawn to wakken tendher feelins i' mony a sympathisin heart. Into that rough cottage, scant o' furnithur, wi' whiteweshed woles an' sonded floor, coome thoughts an' sthrains fro heaven's star-jewelled arches, theere to rest an' tak shapes fit for mortal use. Little o' thoose wondherful far-sent messages these age-worn sheets con show, but signs an' glints ov immortal leet are lingerin yet reaund 'em, to prove what stores o' sthrong an' tendher fancy lee hud in th' mind 'at plodded so long an' hard to stamp 'em wi shapes o' peawer an' beauty. Little these clear-dhrawn notes con tell ov o th' time an' thought spent o'er 'em. Art never sleeps. Once James fund he could create he'd never get his mind free again fro getherin fancies. At his loom, at his meals, walkin eautside, sittin among friends or kin, busy at performance or practice, soon as mornin oppen't his e'en or neet shut 'em—nay! mony a time dhremin in his bed, he'd carry th' same cravin wishes, hopes, deaubts. When, time sarvin, he could get bi hissel, quietness reaund him, free to meet his saycret soul face to face, he'd feel sich a joy an' sense o' peawer to rise aboon th' world's chens an' thrammels as few can ever know; but mostly he'd be forced to keep tight howd ov hissel, ploddin on his narrow thrack o' monful duty wi little sign o' th' deep sthrem ov inner life nobry else could share.

There were hardly as mony music professors i' Rachda an' th' neighbourhood a hundherd year sin as we han to-day. Onybody con teighch music neaw afther twelvemonth larnin, but it were noane used to be so. Leach had th' fielt to hissel very near as a singin maisther, things went weel wi him, an' he soon geet known as far as Manchesther.

Poor owd Isaac coome to his end a year afther t' flittin, an' James were sent for in a hurry to see him for th' last time. Th' owd chap were quite sensible, lyin i' bed twitchin t' sthrengs ov his favourite fiddle. He breeten't up to see his best scholar, an' welcom't him in a brokken whisper, for his once clear alto were o but gwone, an' his wynt coome an' went i' gasps.

"Aw'm fain to see thee, lad. Sit thee deawn. Aw ail nowt nobbut owd age. Aw'm levin thee this fiddle. It's th' best aw have. Tha'll happen use it neaw an' again. Just to keep th' owd chap i' thi mind."

"Aw'll use it every day," James towd him. "When aw go to London to join th' king's band aw'll tak this fiddle to play on. An' aw'll have a silver plate put on it—'Presented to James Leach by his beloved and only master in music, Isaac Bamford.'"

Th' owd fiddler's e'en glisten't. "Tha'rt a good lad, Jimmy. Olez kind i' th' heart tha were. O mi copies o' music tha mun have. Aw shouldn't like onybody else to touch 'em. Mony a theausan an' theausan bars. Copied wi mi own honds. That's what helped to make me. Sich a wondherful timist."

"Thank yo," James said, wipin his e'en, touched to find heaw mich Isaac thought on him. "They could be left to nobry 'at's moore respect for yo nor me, iv it's nobbut for th' sake ov owd times. What a weary time it looks, Isaac, sin yo gav me mi first music lesson!"

"It does! It does! A scholar to be preaud on. But it's partly mi way o' teighchin tha knows. Tha's made a din i' th' world sin'. It were me larn't thee—think on o' that! Arta as consayted as tha were?"

"Abeaut th' same, aw think," James said, too mich consarn't at loisin his owd friend to smile.

"Tha would be a composer shuz what aw said. Aw geet that book tha sent me. Wi o thi tunes in. They looken weel i' print. Rare an' weel! Very consayted on thee to print 'em. Mozart could nobbut ha done that. But tha did reet, Jimmy. Tha did just reet."

"Aw know it's consayted enough," James said, "but what con a chap do when he's summat inside him 'at keeps dhrivin him on?"

"Aw know nought abeaut that," whisper't Isaac. "Aw ne'er felt no dhrivin o' that mak." He lee still a minute, an' then said, "Jimmy!"

"Well?"

"Seein as tha's started composin. Aw wouldn't ax thee beaut. To show respect to thi owd maisther like."

"Well?"

"Not as aw'm onyways wishful. To seem betther than other folk. When aw'm laid undher t' clod."

"Well, Isaac? What is it?"

"As tha's made so mony tunes. An' th' mischief's done. Tha met as weel make one moore. An' have it sung o'er th' grave. When they lay'n me deawn."

Soft-hearted James broke deawn otogether at that late confession o' th' owd chap's pride in his lad.

"Aw'll do it, Isaac, yo may be sure. Th' finest tune mi brains con shape or mi fingers write yo shall have; an' th' sweetest voices reaund Wardle shall sing it at th' graveside."

"Aw thank thee, Jimmy," th' owd chap whisper't, lookin plez't an' satisfied. "Aw knew tha'd do it for me. Olez kind i' th' heart. Never hurt nobry. Fro bein a chilt. Tha mun lev me neaw. Aw'm gettin done. Good day, an' God bless thee."

Isaac nobbut lived a day or two longer. His buryin made a greight stir, bringin a dyel o' folk fro th' teawns near; an' there

were few dhry e'en in th' creawded graveyard when Leach's choir sthruck up his fine tune "Egypt," yerd then for th' first time in o it mournful tendherness, weel suited to Watts's hymn :

"And must this body die?"
This well-wrought frame decay?
And must these active limbs of mine
Lie mouldering in the clay?
. . . . . .

God, my Redeemer, lives,
And ever from the skies
Looks down and watches all my dust
Till He shall bid it rise.

Arrayed in glorious grace
Shall these vile bodies shine;
And every shape and every face
Be heavenly and divine.

These lively hopes we owe,
Lord, to Thy dying love;
O may we bless Thy grace below,
And sing Thy power above.

I' less nor five year James sattl't to flit again—to Salford this time, takkin four childher astid o' two, an' so mony goods 'at he'd a job to crom everything on a lurry.

"Well, aw dun know," Esther said, when they'd o londed safe; "we keepen gettin to bigger teawns—there's nowt but London for us neaw!"

But James had moore wit nor thryin London. He'd bin rayther too oft to not know what he met expect theere. Once he'd takken his book o' tunes to th' organist at Westminsther Abbey, an' made hissel known to th' greight mon.

"Hm? Hm!" grunted th' professor, lookin th' book o'er, an' thryin two or three tunes on his harpsichord. "Yes, yes, yes! Defective harmonies—wrong accents—too much similar motion—knowledge of counterpoint wanted. Take a year's course in theory with me—teach you to write then—melodies not without feeling—you sing well too—solo in anthem very good last night—you have natural taste and talent. Study with me for a year."

"It'll do noane," James said, wi th' owd smile on his face. "Aw've a wife an' four childher to keep, an' no brass to spare for studyin here. But aw'm obleeged to yo th' same for o' that."

"Dear, dear, dear!" says th' professor. "Pity to be so poor, isn't it? Great pity for you, young man! Great pity! Could have made something of you."

"An' made summat eaut on me, beside," Leach thought wi a touch o' native thrift as th' greight mon showed him eaut. "Well, aw knew what he'd say—nobbut aw'd a sneakin hope he met praise mi wark a bit, an' yet aw felt sich hopes were foolishness.

Chance is a fine thing! Aw have it in me to make as good a musician as yon docthor; but he's howdin th' best position i' London, whol aw mun scrat o mi life for nowt mich beside bare livin."

Then he smil't at hissel to find heaw consayted he were gettin, an' thried to put th' disappointment eaut ov his mind.

So James were noane likely to bother London, knowin as weel as onybody could tell him he'd nobbut be eaut of his place theere, an' weel enough satisfied wi th' honest position his talent had won for him i' Lancashire.

He'd his honds full neaw, havin to come o'er to Rachda twice a week, an' bein full up wi pupils at t' Manchester end. Poor owd Isaac's connection he'd bin forced to give up, not beaut frettin a bit; for among o his creawd o' fine friends eaur unspoil't composer liked th' owd uns best, an' were olez fain to set his shoon on Wardle greaund, though, to be sure, his life theere had bin poor an' hard enough, an a dyel smoother road oppen't afore him neaw.

IX.

Afther a while eaur risin composer geet a second book o' tunes printed, an' fund little throuble i' sellin 'em, for his name were known o up an' deawn England through his music an' Wesley's hymns gooin together. Th' preface to this second book shows 'at James had recollected Wesley's advice abeaut not havin th' music petched up, an' gies us a sample o' th' composer's best Sunday English, marked bi his never-failin thought an' good sense:

"A few years ago, by the advice of a friend, I ventured to publish a small volume of Hymns and Psalm Tunes, and have reason to believe it has met with a kind reception, as a second edition has been called for and is rapidly going off. I promised a second volume, consisting of several select pieces, as well as tunes suited to different meters usually sung in public. This promise would have been fulfilled some time since, but the poverty occasioned by the present war put a check upon my design; for it is to be noted that many of my brethren in the musical line are pretty much like myself—viz., we are not troubled with much wealth. However, the work is now committed to the public, and must, therefore, take its chance—whatever credit or profit may accrue to the author.

In my first work I requested that no one would attempt the altering of my tunes, but let them run just as they are; in this my request has been in the general complied with. I have heard of very few who have pretended to improve them. In the general we may say of music menders what is vulgarly said of tinkers—in attempting to repair one hole they make two. Pedantry in every

department is ridiculous, and full as much in music as in any other science, and often proves injurious to the original composer. It may be called a sort of piratical murder, and it would be exceeding well if the legislature were to appoint that such a one should never appear in public but with a cap or mitre on his head, marked in the front with this label—*Assassin*; for surely he is guilty of a two-fold assassination—even the music and the character of the author. I have seen excellent tunes so mangled and disfigured by self-conceited improvers that they have left them, like the man who fell among thieves, stripped and wounded, *even half dead.* I would here remark that the old 100 psalm tune has lately undergone a metamorphosis of this sort, which has left it neither spirit nor life. If a man can fancy himself capable of improving the works of another, he is certainly capable of composing himself; and if so, let him build upon his own ground, and if there be any merit in his work let him wear the honour.

Furthermore, I would here advise that when a new tune is introduced into a congregation, to be sung by the people in general, to sing the tenor *only* for a few times, that such as catch a tune only by the ear may obtain a right notion of the same, for unless that is the case they are apt to jumble the notes together and make a most wretched jargon. I own it is a prodigious disadvantage to a tune its being produced with a naked tenor only; but if the tune be a good one it will clear its own way, especially if a reason be assigned for so singular an introduction.

There is another great indecorum in many who have good voices but only sing by the ear, and that is, their attempting to sing the other parts—the bass, for instance, which sounds like the growling of a bear or an angry mastiff. There are great inconveniences which common singing is liable to, but is not the case in singing select pieces, where none engage but such as understand music. But as I wish the divine science to be as general as it possibly can in public congregations, so I wish it to be performed with the utmost decency.

The design of music is to exhilarate and animate the mind; to soothe it under its various cares, vicissitudes and anxieties, while passing through the house of our pilgrimage here below; it will be well for all who engage in it to aim at the glory of our Maker, so that we may in due time join the choir above, where pain and sickness, sighs and tears, shall never succeed our loftiest strains to all Eternity."

Heaw's that for a Wardle hond-loom weighver?

Some folk may be puzzl't bi this advice to sing th' tenor bi itsel, but they mun recollect th' owd style o' writin were to put th' chief melody i' th' tenor part. Sopranos oft used to be co'd female tenors.

Iv musical pirates had to wear thoose marked caps neawadays, what a greight an' busy industhry cap-makin ud be!

An' iv o composers took James's hee views ov his art what should we do for comic operas?

Let it be said here 'at onybody curious to weigh up James Leach's knowledge an' skill i' music mun turn to th' first editions ov his books to do it. Aw've sin a lot ov his psalm tunes arranged i' short score bi different folk, but some road arrangers cawn't be satisfied to let 'em "run just as they are." Melodies are chopped up, inner parts twisted abeaut, bass parts otogether re-written, blundhers made 'at James hissel ud ha bin th' first to laugh at. We mun look at his own wark to judge him. That wark's noane perfect, but Leach wrote wi a maisther's grip, an' his faurts are nobbut noticeable neaw becose music's made sich sthrides forrad sin' his day, an' part-writin's getten to sich a hee level. Considherin th' state ov his art at that time, wi his scant chances to larn, it's bare justice to reckon him a genius; an' aw'm forced to fret when aw see prentice-honds spoilin his tunes, damagin his hard-won credit, an' helpin to keep his own thoughtful, solid wark i' th' backgreaund.

His second collection o' tunes helped on Leach's grooin fame, an' soon spread o'er miles o' counthry; but whol nearly everybody were busy praisin his wark th' young chap, ill satisfied wi it hissel, were carefully studyin heaw to mend his knowledge, an' practisin anthem-writin for voices wi wind an' sthreng band. So, makin th' most ov every heaur ov his time, ploddin steady an' thoughtful up his risin road to honour an' fortin, James turned th' corner o' Kesmas, seventeen hundherd an' ninety-seven, an' broke into th' new year.

X

One February neet James Leach sit wi his wife an' sisther Mary bi his kitchen fire, smookin his pipe, lapped i' thought as he mostly were, whol th' women's tongues ran on i' quiet chatther.

Billy had bin sent for to play at a concert i' Manchesther, so he'd brought Mary o'er wi him for th' day, plannin to sleep at James's heause an' catch th' mornin coach wom.

Esther were knittin as hoo talked, an' watchin her husband's face as th' fireleet played o'er it.

"James," hoo said to him in a while, wi a little sigh, "aw don't know heaw it is, but tha'rt like never cheerful an' leet-hearted same as other folk. There should be nowt neaw to stop thee fro bein happy."

"Happy!" her husband said, wakkenin up wi a breet look at her. "Aw've ne'er bin nowt else sin aw knew thee."

"Tha dosen't show it, then," says Esther. "Tha bothers thi yead too mich. Think less, tak thi wark yezzier, an' start enjoyin thisel a bit moore. Tha's olez a face as long as thi fiddle."

"Have aw, lass!" James axed, laughin. "Aw didn't know things had getten so bad as that. Why, bless thi heart, Esther, there's nobry moore content nor me! Iv life keeps gooin on wi us as it's doin neaw, aw s' ne'er grumble nor want to change; an' that should satisfy thee whether aw'm happy or not."

"Tha's like getten very sayrious, latly, that's thrue," says Mary. "Tha were olez cheerful an' cant when tha lived i' Wardle, an' ready enough wi thi joke. Is it this Salford soot, or what is it?"

"He's a dyel *too* sayrious," Esther said. "Aw cawn't abide to see him so deawnkest an' quiet, lapped up i' music as iv there were nowt else i' th' world woth lookin at. We're weel off neaw, an' aw wain't let him teaw hissel to t' dyeath—aw love him rayther too mich for that."

"Aw mun tak mi chance, lass. It's no use thryin to goo again mi nathur. Happen some day, when aw've composed music enough, aw con shap wi less thinkin, but it's no use botherin abeaut it just neaw."

"Rest a bit," says Esther. "Play thee awhile—it'll be summat fresh for thee, that will. Look what a greight mon tha's groon into fro a poor weighver; be satisfied wi what tha's done, an' think abeaut makin thi life comfortable."

"Aw wish music could quieten eaur Billy a bit," Mary says, laughin. "He's as mich gam in him as ever, for o his pipe blowin, an' to look at him nobry'd think he'd childher awom. He's stopped fuddlin neaw, aw guess—yon concert mun be o'er long sin'."

"It's no use, lasses," James said. "There's no stoppin nor stonnin still neaw—aw mun push on or dee."

"Nay! there's no need to talk abeaut deein yet, surelee!" said his wife. "Tha'rt nobbut six-an'-thirty, an' looks as weel as ever tha did."

"There's long years afore us yet, no deaubt," James said, "an' moore credit to be won nor we con reckon up to-neet. Aw'm just seein mi road into scientific part-writin, an' afore long aw'll tackle th' college scholars on their own greaund. Talk no moore o' givin up, Esther! Aw'm nobbut just beginnin!"

There coome a thunge on th' dur, an' then a bang or two, makin Esther beaunce up to see who'd com'n.

"That's Billy, aw con yer," Mary said. "Does th' gawmless thing want to wakken o yor childher up?"

It were Billy, sure enough. He coome sthridin up to th' harstone, lookin mad, an' brasted eaut,

"There's nowt nobbut rogues i' this teawn." Aw'll come here no moore—nowe! not for gowd sovereigns."

Yezzier, easier.

Th' women looked at him, freeten't, wondherin what had happen't.

"There's honest folk stirrin abeaut here an' theere," James said. "But what's to do, Billy?"

"Nowt. There's enough done, aw think, for one while. Aw tell thee, Jimmy, there's wasthrels here 'at 'd tak new-weshed clooas off a hedge!"

"What hast had agate?" Mary axed.

"It were meaunted wi silver," Billy said, cobbin his cap deawn an' puffin eaut his plump red cheeks. "It's bin i' th' family fifty year, an' moore too, an' neaw aw mun come thrailin o this road to get it stown!"

"Is it thi hobye tha's lost?" James axed, seein leet.

"Lost!" Billy grunted wi vexation. "Aw ne'er lost nowt i' mi life, nobbut odd bits o' things neaw an' again, or happen a chisel or a two-foot. It's bin stown, aw tell yo! Aw just dhropped in at a aleheause, accidental like, when th' concert finished, put mi pipe deawn whol aw supped a pint, an' theere, lo an' behowd, it went—scutther't—bowted—flew! There ne'er were a chap like me i' this world for ill luck! Aw mun ha bin witched i' mi cradle, it's my belief. Why, yon pipe belonged mi gronfayther! Aw would'nt ha parted wi it for nowt."

"Tha's no business i' aleheauses," Mary said. "Heaw oft mun aw warn thee? Iv tha'd com'n sthraight wom this could ne'er have happen't.

"Ale does me good," says Billy, sittin him deawn. "It's a kind craythe is wom-brewed to a chap 'at swallows as mich stone dust as me, an' aw'll ne'er 'buse it. But aw played a tune on some o' their shins 'at they'll recollect for a bit. They took me for green becose aw live where grase groos, an' th' brids han reawm to sing; but howd off, says Billy! Wardle again Salford ony day!"

James had some music tools hangin o'er th' cornish, among 'em a fine hobye wi honsome keighs an' fittins. He reighched it deawn, hondin it o'er to his brother-i'-law. "Tha shan't go wom beaut pipe, Billy. Let me make thee a present o' this. It were played on at th' greight Handel festival i' London, so aw bought it for a curiosity, an' there's nobry belongin th' Laych family fitther to use it nor thee."

"Eh, thank thee, Jimmy lad!" Billy said wi honest pride, his temper meltin away. "Tha were olez thoughtful for thi relations." He blew tuthri deep sweet notes on th' pipe, finishin wi a flourish Isaac had larn't him. "It's a grand un, an' praise fro thee weighs like gowd! Aw'll twitther on this as long as mi wynt lets me."

"Iv tha doesn't loise it," Mary says.

"Howd thi din!" Billy said. "Iv ony scamp thries to steighl this aw'll chisel him into scaplins, an' letther his gravestone for nowt."

Clooas, clothes.

XI.

James had business i' Rachda next mornin, so he rode wi his sisther an' her husbant bi th' Leeds coach to th' Roch side, levin his relations to go forrad to Wardle bi theirsel.

"Come an' see us afore long," Billy said, as they parted. "They're o some preaud on thee among yon hills. Tha could do wi a rest, to put some flesh on thi ribs. Tha's a tidy front elevation, like, but thi livin reawms wanten settin fur back. Come o'er to Wardle a bit, an' aw'll soon awther that."

"Well, aw'll do mi best. Is wark plentiful wi thee?"

"There's moore nor aw con do. Folk keepen thryin to dhrive me, but that wain't do for Billy! Good wark wain't be run off it feet."

"It wain't, for sure! Aw know that some weel, an' heaw little there is to show for weeks an' months o' sthrivin."

"Ne'er thee mind!" Billy said, wi a touch o' wisdom 'at seaunded sthrange fro his tongue. "We're buildin stuff to last, thee an' me. There'll be no shuttherin abeaut eaur jobs, noather music nor masonwark, so tak that fro Billy."

"Eh tha braggin thing!" Mary said, nudgin his plump side wi her elbow. "Iv tha'd hawve as mich wit as eaur Jimmy there'd be some hope for thee."

"Foldherdol oldherdol lay!" Billy sang, laughin, as th' coach rowlt forrad.

"What a merry lad he is!" James thought wi hawve a sigh for his own sayrious mind. "But he's plenty o' sense in him, too, has Billy."

He waved his hond, Billy an' Mary motioned back, an' so these lovin hearts parted, never to meet again i' this sorrow-filled world. Never no moore!

James knocked abeaut whol noon busy wi his teighchin. Then he geet a bit o' dinner, an' sattl't wi some Union-street Chapel committeemen abeaut some singers they wanted him to thrain up. He'd bin t' choirmaisther at that chapel whol he lived i' Rachda, an' made a dyel o' friends theere—not 'at that were owt new for James, becose everybody were takken at first seet bi his modest manners an' honest look.

Then he co'd to see Parson Threlkeld abeaut some music for a special sarvice at Blackwayther Chapel. This were a wondherful chap, 'at could talk i' nine languages, an' knew o 'at were or ever had bin. He were as good as a reference library, an' cost a dyel less to keep. For o his wondherful knowledge th' owd gentleman were just as simple as a lad, wi abeaut as mich notion o' managin ony business; an' he'd getten so short-seeted wi porin o'er his books 'at he'd to put his face close to Leach's afore he could make him eaut.

ROCHDALE (FROM ST. CHAD'S CHURCHYARD).

Afther that there were moore lessons to give up an' deawn th' teawn, but James geet his wark finished i' time to catch th' coach as it coome through fro Yokshire. He stood a minute waitin for it bi th' Market Cross, lookin reaund him at clear river, green church-slope an' spreadin fields, o touched wi frost, when James Hamilton happen't to come past, makin toard his tin-hommerin shop. These two were greight friends, an' had bin long afore Leach left Wardle. This were th' Hamilton 'at fund brass to pay for th' composer's first book o' music; an' James had put a tune in co'd afther his friend, sayin it were like intherist on th' loan.

"Now, my lad!" says Hamilton, "are you off back without calling to see me? You have no business to pass White Beaver Yard without coming in."

"Eh, aw'm fain to see yo!" says James, lookin wi pleasur into his friend's face, where marks o' content an' happiness were plain for o to see. "Aw've had a throng day, an' nobbut just finished. When will yo come o'er to Salford again? T' childher's olez axin abeaut yo. Come o'er o' Sunday."

"Sunday, you rascal!" Hamilton laughed. "What about my school?"

"To be sure! Aw weren't thinkin just for th' minute. Yo'n a rare lot a scholars neaw, aw yer."

"The place is crammed every Sunday. Since we moved into Union-street our numbers have grown fast."

"Aw've just written a sort o' Sunday Schoo Ode," James said. "Aw'll bring it o'er next time aw come for yo to see. It's finished neaw o but tuthri notes. It begins wi this—

'Blest be the man whose lib'ral heart
Our Sunday schools began!
To train the Youth in Virtue's path
How Godlike was the plan!

If ought on earth could merit praise,
Or Heaven's favour gain,
To lead the Youth in Wisdom's ways
Must surely both obtain.'

Then there's a long chorus to finish off—summat very grand, yo'll see."

"Bring it over and I will teach the school children to sing it. They like your tunes, perhaps because the airs are easy to catch."

"Done yo never get weary o' bein tee'd so mich? Yo'n had a long sthretch o' this teighchin, neaw, an' may weel take a rest."

"Sixteen long, happy years I have been at the work," Hamilton said, smilin, shakin a finger at some childher as they passed an' sheauted to him, for nearly o' th' young uns i' Rachda knew an' loved that good mon. "You remember the beginning of it in the little chamber over my works? You were courting then, James; a shy, meditative youth, unknown to fame."

"Aw wondher yo don't get weary o' th' job," James said, as his coach rowlt up wi a dyel a fuss an' horn-blowin. "Yo'n wark enough beaut."

Hamilton whispered in his ear: "Whoso shall receive one little child in My name receiveth Me."

"Well, good-neet, an' God bless yo," says James, as they shook honds. "Aw'm foolish to talk on yo givin up wark 'at's rewarded bwoth i' this world an' th' next."

"Good-night, my dear lad. Long life and prosperity. Give my love to your wife."

"An' tell her yo'll be comin o'er soon?"

"Yes, you may promise that in all truth."

So James climbed onto th' coach top, cracked a joke wi t' guard an' dhriver, knowin 'em bwoth weel wi thravellin so oft, planted hissel wi owd Isaac's fiddle on his knees, an' off th' horses went wi a rattle, as iv they could undherstond they were on th' last sthretch o' their journey.

Th' coach beawlt away up Church Lone, through Bluepits an' Middleton, James hummin one of his new anthems, his thoughts runnin on his music, his wife an' childher, as they mostly did.

"God bless that lovin lass o' mine," he thought. "What aw should do beaut her, or what hoo could do beaut me, there's no tellin. We s' have yon lads groon up soon. Jim's beaun to make a fiddler aw believe. Will they live to be preaud o' their fayther, or find eaut wi time 'at James Leach thought he could compose, but nobbut made a foo ov hissel? It'll be a pity iv o mi thought an' throuble's bin wasted; but aw guess iv it has aw'm noane th' first mon 'at's spent his life huntin game he couldn't catch."

His thoughts were brokken off theere, sudden an' for ever. Th' coach had getten to Blackley broo, an' were beawlin deawn at a good speed when a wheel flew off. Th' coach went o'er, throwin everybody off th' top, so for tuthri minutes there were din an' skrikin enough. When th' plungin horses had bin quieten't a bit th' passengers were looked to. Most on 'em had gether't theirsels up, moore or less marked an' banged abeaut bi their sudden upset, but one tall young chap lee very still undher th' hedge, howdin fast to a brokken fiddle-box.

A docthor had bin fund somewheere near, an' he were busy plaistherin some o' th' wur hurt among th' passengers when th' guard coome up, carryin a big blundherbuss o'er his shouldher.

"Docthor," he says, in a whisper, "just come look at Jimmy Leach as soon as ever yo con. Aw don't like th' look on him a bit."

T' docthor went where th' guard took him, an' fund th' poor lad lyin still—his fiddle brokken, his modest hopes ended.

"Look heaw he lies!" th' guard says. "Aw mislike it."

T' docthor bent to feel pulse an' heart, an' look into th' seetless e'en. One look were enough. He dhropped James's limp delicate hond, sthraighten't hissel up, an' said, whol scodin tears ran deawn th' guard's brode red face,

" He 's stone dead !"

We con onswer th' sensitive composer's deaubts ov hissel neaw. His music lives afther a full hundherd year o' time's passed o'er it, stirrin an' meltin theausans ov hearts yet, on moore sides o' th' say nor one, wi peawer as fresh an' sthrong as when Wesley yerd it rowlt i' rich cadence up th' moorside at Wardle.

Honest an' careful wark's seldom wasted. Iv James had spared his thoughtful brains he met very likely ha bin moore lively an' cheerful, an' made his life a dyel pleasanther nor he ever cared to do. Then his music met ha bin as empty an' coarse as th' liltin, maudlin Merica rubbitch sung i' mony a church an' chapel neaw, wheere they'd do weel to turn again to Leach's simple sweet sthrains, never wantin i' religious feelin an' good taste. Then th' poor lad met ha dee'd as soon as he'd a mind, bin buried, an' theere an end.

But this unlarn't weighver took a sayrious view ov his rare gifts, an' once his road were plain to him he followed it wi steady feet. For o he'd little confidence in his life's wark comin to mich, he put o his soul an' mind into it, never restin ; determin't, whether he could make music good enough to last or not, it should at least be as good as he'd peawer in him to make it.

This monly modest spirit it were 'at directed th' composer's sthrength to one aim, stopped him fro frittherin his talent away on useless things, lifted him fro th' rut o' grindin never-endin mechanical wark—enough in itsel, God knows, to crush every hee ambition eaut ov ony but th' toughest o' folk— made him a name 'at's loved an' respected yet, an' will be for long years to come.

This yearnest sthrivin it were 'at lifted his mind above th' common level, made him sich a peawer in his own day an' generation, sent his melodies ringin through every clough an' valley reaund abeaut his native hills, set him so deep in th' hearts o' thoose 'at knew him best, an' made hundherds o' folk feel 'at bi loisin him they'd lost moore like a brother nor a friend.

Wardle Wesleyans han no need to meet i' aleheause garrets neaw. They'n a good chapel o' their own, an a honsome new schoo beside, opposite th' owd fowt. O they're short on is some stone or monument to James Leach, for in o his native village there's nowt to show he ever lived theere, or were undherstood bi a single one ov his neighbours. It should be summat simple an' plain, sich as would ha satisfied James's refined taste, an' every penny o' th' cost should be paid for bi Wardle-born folk. John Leach preighched th' oppenin sarmons i' this chapel in 1809, so

far gwone wi age 'at two chaps had to help him in an' eaut o' th' pulpit. He dee'd soon afther, endin a long life spent i' faithful, humbled-minded Christian wark, gooin to his grave wi everybody's good word; an' iv th' cliverest chap ever born could do moore nor that, or make betther use ov his time, aw'm curious to know heaw he'd set abeaut it.

Billy wi th' Pipes had a hond i' th' mason wark, so we may be sure it's weel done; for though Billy olez took his own time o'er a job, nobry could mend it when he'd finished. He kept his cheerful carless spirits an' his likin for ale to th' end ov his life, an' dee'd weel respected but noane so rich, for Mary had to start teighchin a schoo i' th' fowt to keep hersel when he'd gwone. They'd three sons—Abram o' Billy's, a famous alto singer; Jim o' Billy's, 'at played a horse-leg an' lived at Biggins; John o' Billy's, 'at did nowt mich nobbut make flannel an' brass. They'd a daughther, too, 'at wed a Rachda chap co'd Edward Waugh. This couple, among other childher, had a son kessent Edwin, 'at broke eaut into poethry astid o' measles, an' catched a runnin influenza o' dialect writin 'at stuck to him as long as he lived. This Edwin wed my mother's cousin, so we're o related in a rook.

We mun dhrop a dacent curtain o'er th' sorrows an' sthruggles ov Esther Leach an' her four childher, left to feight their road as weel as they could. Some Manchesther an' Rachda friends published a book o' James's tunes an' anthems to raise some brass for his widow an' orphans, an' help were noane slack at comin fro Wardle. Billy, wi tears in his e'en, begged on his sisther-i'-law to go back to th' owd village, where warm hearts an' oppen durs were waitin for her; but Esther were too independent to saddle her relations, thought her childher could do betther where they were, an' so sattl't to stop.

James Leach lies in Union-sthreet Chapel graveyard. On th' stone 'at covers him these words are chisell't :—

Here
Lieth the Body of James Leach
who without the aid of
Classical Science
By the singular felicity of
Original Genius
Was raised to a high degree
Of Celebrity
As a teacher and composer of
Sacred Music.
His death was occasioned by the
Breaking down of the
Leeds Coach near Manchester
on his return from a visit
to this town February 8th, 1798.
Aged 36 yeais.
Reader
There is but one step between thee and Death.

Kessent, christened.

Squeezed into th' top corners o' this square flag, as iv bi some aftherthought, Leach's tune "Egypt," composed for Isaac Bamford's buryin, could once be read; but he'd be a keen-seeted musician 'at could make it eaut neaw.

This gravestone's badly weather-worn an' throdden. It's as owd as Tim Bobbin's, within a dozen year or so. Iv it should ever come to be carved o'er again, or to be swapped for one moore worthy o' James Leach's memory, a possible thing neaw th' fashion's set in for fettlin graves up, reawm should be made for tuthri lines written bi John Milton o'er a friend ov his own—a friend betther larn't, to be sure, but no moore gifted or desarvin nor this gentle-hearted, reet-minded, self-knowin, plain weighver-lad fro Wardle.

> "Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
> (That last infirmity of noble minds)
> To scorn delights and live laborious days:
> But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
> And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
> Comes the blind Fury with the abhorrèd shears,
> And slits the thin-spun life."

MAGIC AT NORDEN.

I.

There's a bit ov a fowt at th' top o' Woodheause Lone, just afore yo getten to th' moor foot, wheere once ov a day there lived a wizart. He'd nowt mich in his looks to fley onybody, an' at first seet met ha' passed for a common, harmless chap enough; an' when yo come to think abeaut it bwoth wizarts an' witches mun be made o' th' same sort o' stuff as gradely folk as far as th' eautside's consarnt, th' main difference bein 'at dyelers i' magic han their inside reawms betther fitted up for makin Owd Scrat sattle deawn an' feel awom.

This Norden professor were a little lame chap, very thin an' sickly lookin, as iv his quare job weren't otogether wholsome; an' moore nor one fawse brid i' th' neighbourhood (there's a dyel o' sharp-set wits between Bagslate an' Meadow Yead) said he'd ne'er ha bother't wi magic but for th' white swellin in his knee, an' a sort o' nattheral dislike for hard wark. Nobry knew his name, as he weren't a native o' these parts, but a sthrag fro some other cote; so they kessent him Spitfire for a Sunday name, an' co'd him Dulecatcher o' wartays.

There's little need for wizarts neaw, but forty or fifty year sin' that thrade were good—fo'in off a bit happen, but naught mich to grumble abeaut. Boggarts were very wick an' thick on at that time, an' took a dyel o' layin; as yo may know when aw tell yo 'at one owd witch i' Marlan wortched away for three year thryin to side one eaut ov a barn, an' deed beaut shiftin it at th' finish, for th' cawves were runnin up th' woles afore hoo were weel buried, an' they met as weel ha' brokken th' churn up as kept it theere, for ony butther they could squeeze eaut on't. T' farmer said th' owd besom mut ha bargain't wi t' thing to stop theere for so mich a week, knowin hoo were reet for meight an' dhrink whol th' job lasted; but he dursent ha said that afore hoo deed—nowe! nor thought it—for his skin. There were charms for breedin hens 'an grooin crops, spells for makin beef tendher an' keepin milk sweet, speeches for fottin up o maks o' garden stuff—an' that were reckon't a very far-larn't branch o' magic; for what 'd make salary groo met very soon damage th' turmits iv t' performer weren't careful, an' what suited sharlots oft played havoc wi t' fleawer beds. Then there were love charms 'at for abeaut eighteenpence gav a

Sthrag, stray. *Wartays*, week-days.

young chap peawer to wed ony lass he fancied, iv he nobbut bother't her long enough an' hoo happen't to like him; cripplin spells to lame or kill folk, when helped bi a cleaut fro a thorn plant, or a shove deawn a clough-hole; physic for bargains, 'at missed fire sometimes when bwoth buyer an' seller had bin takkin it, or one on em happen't to be honest, curses fit to breighk a cart shaft, an' prayers sure to give long life to healthy folk 'at took care o' theirsel. Then there were sleepin dhraughts an' wakkenin bottles, cures for tooth an' yead wartch, corn an' wart shiftin stuff, dodges for bringin red cheeks an' shinin yure, an' plenty moore thricks; so wi one thing an' another a wizart wi a middlin connection geet wark enough on his honds, an' olez kept it too, for they'd o moore wit nor curin their customers an' loisin 'em.

Spitfire had a tidy little counthry business, mostly dyelin wi pullen or beeas, wi neaw an' again a brokken heart to petch up, or a cracked yead to glue together, an' shapped to make a dacent livin bi th' job. He'd nobbut hissel to keep, for it's one o' t' dhrawbacks i' th' magic line 'at a professor's like forced to live bi hissel, or slatther o' his saycrets; an', as he'd most ov his meight gien him, he managed to save a peaund or two i' th' owd stockin to help him eaut when thrade ran slack, or he'd to send for t' docthor—for he nobbut reckon't to cure other folk, an' ne'er awsed to tackle his own ailments.

He geet famous i' time, an' were talked on as far as Rachda; an' one day, toard t' back end o' t' year, three or four young chaps yerd a barber chattherin abeaut him whol they waited to be shaved.

"Oh, he can raise the devil," th' barber says; "there's no dubitation about that. It's unsafe for any individual to disturb him during the nocturmal period. Little more to the left sir. Thank you."

"Aw'll rugg him up ony neet for a gill ov ale," said a weighver known as Scrawmer for a byname. "He'll fley noane o' me."

"Lets goo up o' Sethurday an' see what he con do," said Tom Horsfall, a young chap eaut ov a wool warehouse. "What saysta, Whiteyead? Tha's studied chemicals a bit."

"Next in rotation, please," th' barber co'd eaut, pooin th' napkin off wi a flourish, an' Horsfall were just gettin up when th' dur banged oppen, an' in beaunced a big heavy chap in a terrible hurry.

"Naa, suds!" he said, "wilta shaave me reight off? Aw've a cooach to catch."

"Gentlemen, please," axed th' barber, lookin reaund th' shop; "can you all wait please?"

Pullen, poultry. *Beeas*, cows.
Rugg, shake; to make a noise on a door or window.
Fley, frighten.

"Aw mun ha' th' next turn, then," said a carther co'd Kershaw; "my time's welly up neaw."

"O reet!" Horsfall said, sittin him deawn again; "Aw'm i' no hurry," says Scrawmer; an' o t'other fellahs nodded.

"Take a seat, please," th' barber said, plantin his new customer in a cheer an' rommin th' towel ends deawn t' back ov his neck. "You *are* rather hirstute, sir."

"What's that!" t'other says, very savage. "Wilta caw me that agean?"

"A little hairy, I mean. No offence, please; no offence."

"He myens yo'n o good thack o' yure reaund th' chops," Kershaw put in, an' th' big chap gave o'er glarin at th' barber, laughed an' sattl't hissel again th' block. "Aw thowt he were cawin me summat noane reight."

"Nay, it's nobbut Latin for yure," Kershaw said. "What's t' foreign for sithers, Sammy?"

"There is no precise equivalent in the Latin," th' barber towd him. "We can only express the term by using a figure of speech —as 'corrigendum' to clip; 'nescibantur,' to open and shut; and other similes."

"Oppen an' shut, saysta? That wouldn't be a bad word for oysthers, Scrawmer. 'Messybant'—what is't, Sammy?"

"Aw con bant 'em weel enough beaut Latin, Kershaw," Scrawmer said, an' then a greight sluttherin stopped him. Th' chap i' th' shavin-cheer had oppen't his meauth to say summat, an' t' lother brush had wapped fair in, for th' barber were so busy teighchin Latin 'at he'd forgetten to mind his wark. Th' fellah beaunced up, sheawerin suds o' reaund him, like a fairy feauntain or a deggin-cart, an' stood starin at Sammy as iv he'd a mind to eight him.

"Very sorry, sir," t' barber says, dancin abeaut him; "beg pardon, I'm sure. Quite an accident—a lapsus linguæ in fact."

"What tha meeans is 'at aw mun loss mi cooach an' get mi inside full o' sooap-suds, o for a penny. Arta fit to be thrusted wi a raazor, or tha'll cut mi heead off afore tha's done? Leeave thi Latin, an' get me shaaved i' English."

"Certainly, sir," th' barber said, gettin him planted, an' gatin lotherin again as hard as he could. "Fine day, please."

Th' Yorkshireman fixed sich a murdherous look on him 'at he dursen't say another word, so he geet forrad wi his wark i' quietness for once.

"What were ta sayin abeaut gooin o'er to Norden, Horsfall?" axed Whiteyead.

"Aw say we'll go o' Sethurday iv tha's a mind, an' teighch him a bit o' conjurin ov a new mak. We con soon raise th' dule among us, whether he does or not. Bring a bit o' phosphorus, an'

Thack, thatch.

brimstone, an' gunpeawdher, an' sich-like eaut o' th' shop—owt 'at's ony gam abeaut it—an' we'll show him summat."

"Aw'll goo," says Whiteyead; "neaw Scrawm?"

"Oh ah! aw mun see th' fun," Scrawmer says. "Wilta goo, Kershaw?"

"Sartain," Kershaw said. "We'll make hawve a day on it. We con goo up bi th' "Moorcock," cross o'er Rooley's, an' dhrop deawn on th' boggart hunter toard neet, when th' eawls are skrikin. There's nowt abeaut *him* woth gooin for, but it'll be a bit of a eaut."

Th' Yorkshireman were polished off bi neaw; so he gether't his thraps up, gav th' barber his penny, an' made for th' dur.

"Thank you, sir," says Sammy, dodgin afther him wi a clooas-brush to sweep some bits o' dust off his jacket. "Good day, please. Come from Bradford way, sir?"

"Ne'er thee mind," th' big chap said. "It's naught to thee wheere aw coome thro, nor where aw'm baan. Bedlam's thy counthry;" an' off he bowted.

"Rather uncivil, that gentleman," Sammy said, as th' dur banged.

"Tha wouldn't be so exthra polite thysel iv somebry rommed a lother brush deawn thi throat," Kershaw said, takkin th' cheer. "Noane o' thi Latin marlocks wi me, neaw!"

"No, sir; certainly not, sir; thank you, sir. It is a singular circumstance, or what one might term a phenomenon, that the ancient Romans ——"

"Wilta howd thi din an' get me shav't?" Kershaw co'd eaut. "There's mi horse an' cart bin stonnin i' t' brode enthry aboon hawve an heaur, waitin o' thee an' thi crackjaw talk."

"Yes, sir; thank you, sir," Sammy said; an' shapped to keep his tongue still whol he'd finish't wi t' carther.

"Well! Sethurday, lads," Kershaw said, makin ready for off. "Wheere hast put mi whip, Sammy? Tha doesn't want it to stir thi lother up wi, doesta?"

"No, sir; here it is, sir; behind the mensarum. Thank you, sir."

"Be at th' 'Winkin Kittlin' at two o' t' clock, an' we'll o' meet thee," Horsfall said.

"Agreed on," says t' carther; an' off he went.

"Mr. Kershaw is generally in a hurry," th' barber said, as he sattl't Horsfall i' th' yure cuttin cheer. "Fugit cito slurritur pede. Will you have much off, Mr. Horsfall, please! Brevis or longa?"

"It's noane a bit o' use me tellin thee, Sammy, for tha olez cuts it just t' same shuz what aw say. Get done an' let me be gooin. Iv Kershaw comes here in a hurry he comes to t' wrong shop, for tha con waste hawve a day's time for a chap as yezzy as onybody aw know on." Then he beaunced up, sheautin "O-o-o-o!"

for Sammy had nipped him wi doin t' fancy prestissimo flourish reaund th' neckhole 'at o barbers are so fond o' playin at.

"Very sorry, sir! Very sorry! Merely an accident, please! Kindly be seated."

"Oh ah! iv tha snicked mi yead off it'd nobbut be a accident, aw reckon," Horsfall grumbl't, wipin t' blood off his neck. "Iv tha does that again aw'll fot thee a wusk 'at'll sarve thee this year eaut."

"Extremely sorry, Mr. Horsfall. Mea culpa."

"Stop thi gibberidge!" sheauted t' wool sorther, turnin reaund as mad as he could howd, feelin no betther to see Whiteyead an' Scrawmer rowlin abeaut brastin wi laughin. "Get thi job done, an' don't lev so mony cellar steps up t' sides o' mi yead as tha uses doin. Tha turns me eaut sometimes like a waytherworks shoot, or a horse-scraper."

"Or a scolloped bakin-tin, or a worted cockle shell," Whiteyead says to help him eaut.

"Or a pair o' rough-ribbed stockins, or th' iron window-shuts at th' Store," Scrawmer put in.

"Ah; or a patent laddher for performin fleas, or —— or owt. Neaw, Sammy, chirp another word afore tha's finished wi me an' we'll make hashed meight on thee whol we han thee to eaursel."

When Horsfall were thrimmed off an' ready to bowt Whiteyead geet up, put his top-cwot on, an' shapped for off too, as nowt were.

"Hair cutting, Mr. Whitehead, please?" Sammy axed, starin at him.

"It wants cuttin some ill," Whiteyead says, wi his hond on th' dur latch. "It's groon hawve an inch or so whol aw've bin sittin here waitin mi turn."

"Don't go, Mr. Whitehead, please. I will cut it in a moment —instanter, so to speak."

"Nay, mi time's up neaw, so get forrad wi Scrawmer yead. Aw'll rugg thee up some mornin abeaut five o' t' clock, so as tha con have a full day at th' job. Aw coome here wi an heaur an' a hawve to spare, thinkin that 'd gi thee margin enough, but aw'm cheted once again."

They left t' little barber grinnin a sickly grin, i' deaubt whether they were makin gam on him or not, an' bowted.

"Tha'rt a comical chap, Whiteyead," Horsfall says, spluttherin an' laughin, when they geet eautside. "What the hangment made thee sit yon o this while iv tha wants nowt doin at thee?"

"Howd thi noise!" says Whiteyead, turnin into his shop. "Aw never let Sammy pow me, tha knows. Aw nobbut co when aw've a bit o' time to put on. It's cheper nor th' aleheause, an' there's a dyel moore gam. Well, next Sethurday, Tom?"

"O reet, lad," Horsfall said, an' knocked forrad whistlin.

Pow, to cut the hair.

II.

Spot.—Kitchen o' th' "Winkin Kittlin." Sonded floor, white-weshed woles, Smobridge ceilin (bare planks an' cross-byems). Seauth woles decorated wi a big wood-framed wusted sampler, full o' tombstones, temples, weepin willows, an' coffin lids; balanced bi two little oil paintins—Napoleon ridin o'er some Alps as big as haycocks, an' Burns gawpin at his plough astid o' gettin forrad wi his wark an' shiftin hissel fro undher a very solid-lookin spirit o' poethry, foin fro th' cleauds full-bang on his yead. North wole filled wi a big pot-shelf an' th' window. East wole hung wi breet-polished tin cookin-tackle, a weather-glass, an' a wood clock. Owd-fashion't chimbley-piece on th' west, set eaut wi two pot ornaments, a coffee mill, two brass candlesticks, an' th' ale warmer, an' fitted up wi new boiler, oon, an' firebars. Tuthri hams an' a brass kettle hangin fro hooks i' th' top. Bread-flake, full o cakes, wi some flannel shirts an' lin clooas hangin fro one end. Reaunt dyel table, cracked reight across th' middle, dhresser, square wood cheers, an' a form or two. Slopstone undher t' window; fuchsia in a fleawer-pot i' th' window-bottom.

Folk.—Scrawmer, Horsfall, Whiteyead, an' Sammy pyercht abeaut wi gill pots.

Time.—Hawve-past two o' Sethurday.

(Enther Kershaw, sweatin).

Kershaw.—Eh, lads! aw've welly had to breighk mi neck to catch yo. It went a quather-past as aw coome deawn th' Packer, an' aw felt sure yo'd o be gwone. *(Rubs weet off his yead).*

Horsfall.—Th' day's young enough yet, lad, for owt we han to do.

Kershaw.—What, Sammy! That's ne'er thee, belike?

Sammy.—Yes, sir; it is indeed. I am here, as the duke's motto says. How are you, please?

Kershaw.—What me? Eh! bless thi ribs! aw ne'er ail nowt. Cartin's th' best job there is. But heaw will t' business shap to-neet, Sammy? Hasta left somebry waggin t' sithers for thee?

Sammy.—No hair-cutting to-day, sir. Shaving only on Saturdays.

Scrawmer.—That's war again! Iv tha's left a new-catcht un on th' job he'll be cuttin a throttle or two.

Sammy *(grinnin).*—Oh no, sir! No fear of that! My assistant is no such catechumentical bungler.

Horsfall.—By gum!

Whiteyead.—That's a good un, Sammy. Aw ne'er yerd that afore. It's a swing wi it like a rantipow.

Bread-flake, rack for oatcake.

KERSHAW.—Nor me, noather. It's long enough for a bucklin chen. What were it, Sammy? Summat abeaut cats an' ale? Aw'll have a gill afther that, as heaw.

SCRAWMER.—Sammy's getten that off o' purpose for th' do. We durn't get 'em that length i' th' shavin shop. Is't Latin, owd brid?

SAMMY.—Partially derived from the Roman tongue, sir, please.

HORSFALL.—An' it myens yezzy shavin, aw reckon, does it?

SAMMY.—Well, yes, sir; we may say it is equivalent to that, sir, except perhaps in a few isolated cases.

WHITEYEAD.—Bi th' mass! he's fair runnin o'er wi 'em to-day. We s' larn summat afore we getten him on th' top o' Rooley's, iv he doesn't give us o th' yeadwartch.

SCRAWMER.—Well, come, Kershaw! Here's to thee. What's made thee so lat to-day? Aw thought yo knocked off at twelve ov a Sethurday.

KERSHAW.—Ah, we done reckon so; but t' wark has to be done, tha knows. Aw've had some stone to fot fro Whitoth, an' that thrut me a bit. There's some stirrins up theere to-day.

O ON 'EM.—What's to do?

KERSHAW.—Well, it's Wakes for one thing, yo known. But that's noane o on't.

SAMMY.—What is it then, please?

KERSHAW.—Aw thought yo barbers knew ov o 't stirred. Heaw is't tha's to come to me for thi news when tha keeps a shop 'at's nobbut one greight earhole for o th' teawn?

SAMMY.—He, he! Very good, sir; very good.

HORSFALL.—Iv tha wants to laugh, Sammy, set thi lid gradely oppen; tha'rt wur nor a tewit, scrapin. What's bin up, then, Kershaw?

KERSHAW.—Aw'll tell yo in a bit; but aw'm as dhry as unslecked lime. *(Hommers on th' table. Enther lonlort.)*

LONLORT.—Were yo knockin?

KERSHAW.—Gill ov ale.

(Enther another Chap.)

CHAP.—An' bring me one.

LONLORT.—Hasta owt to pay wi?

CHAP.—Nowe. Is thi chalk o done?

LONLORT.—Happen not; but thi dur's full. It's time tha gated sthraightenin th' owd off afore tha sups fresh.

CHAP.—Tha makes a dyel o' bother abeaut a saup ov ale. Aw'm th' best customer tha's getten, amm't aw?

LONLORT.—Tha met be iv there were ever ony brass at th' end on't; but it's wur nor gatin a chancery shuit chalkin up for a fellah like thee.

KERSHAW.—Come, owd mon! Don't keep us here o day!

(Lonlort bowts.)

Yeadwartch, headache.

CHAP.—This is gratitude, this is! Afther o aw've spent i' this heause, an' o th' flat ale aw've sided for him! It's a rare world!

SAMMY.—Beati shunt non qui expectant—

CHAP.—Iv that says another word aw'll knock thi e'en up! Wilta cob Welsh at me?

(Enther Lonlort wi one gill.)

LONLORT.—Thee make less o' thi din, Cropper. Aw'll ha noane ov a chap like thee sheautin at good customers.

CHAP.—Arta for bringin me nowt?

LONLORT.—Nowe.

CHAP.—Then tha mun tak th' consequences. It'll be laid to thee iv owt happens.

LONLORT.—Aw's ne'er take no brass off thee, it's my belief, whatever else aw get.

CHAP.—Enough said! Tha's done t' thrick neaw. Tha's brought it on thisel.

HORSFALL.—Fot him a gill; he looks hawve-clemmed. Aw'll pay for it.

(Lonlort slutthers off.)

CHAP.—Well! th'art t' first friend aw've fund this mony a year. God bless thee!

(Slats maudlin tears abeaut. Lonlort brings gill.)

HORSFALL.—Here's a penny, Daff. Give him a hondful o' cake-brade an' cheese; he's nobbut hawve wick.

CHAP.—Good health! Here's hopin every poor fellah may find as good a friend when he's hard up.

SCRAWMER.—What's makin thee so ill off. Dost wortch noane?

CHAP.—Oh, yigh! Aw've done a fortnit sin' Whissunday.

WHITEYEAD.—Well, tha may make it a month afore t' year end, iv th'art sharp.

CHAP.—It's a smart, rubbitchly hole ov a world, is this! There's naught but scrattin, an' ne'er no rest for nobry.

KERSHAW.—Tha mun ha rested middlin thisel, iv tha's nobbut made a fortnit sin' last Whissunday. Aw've shifted a good tuthri lwod sin' then. What arta grumblin abeaut?

CHAP.—It'd make onybody grumble, wouldn't it? Aw want nowt nobbut to sit quiet an' get a saup o' summat to sup neaw an' again, but aw munnot do that beaut my wife, or th' rent chap, or somebry botherin. It's a rare world!

HORSFALL.—Goo an' gate o' thi wark, an' howd thi din.

CHAP.—Wortchin agrees noane wi me—it ma'es mi back wartch an' gies me sore feet dhirectly. Pay for another gill wilta?

HORSFALL.—Not iv aw know it! Tha wouldn't ha getten t'other iv aw'd waited to yer thee talk a bit.

Cob, throw. *Cake-brade*, oatcake. *Lwod*, load.

CHAP.—Ah! just as aw expected! Th' owd tale!

SAMMY.—Mr. Kershaw, please; what is that news from Whitworth?

SCRAWMER.—Ah! tha ne'er towd us that.

KERSHAW.—Well, aw will do, when aw've tasted once. (*Sups*).

CHAP (*to hissel*).—What a world!

KERSHAW.—As aw dhrove through Endin abeaut nine o' t' clock this mornin aw coome up wi a dhrove o' young pigs, looked afther bi an owd Irishman; an' aw'd to sheaut at him to sam 'em together a bit so 'at t' cart could pass, for they scutther't an' squeal't reight across th' road. "Heaw fur are yo takkin that lot?" aw axed him. "Bakkup, sur." "Well, aw'd sanner yo'd th' job nor me," aw said. "Och! it's aisy enough to dhroive pigs!" he says, crackin his long whip. "Come out o' the good woman's door, ye wid the black snout! Hurroosh, ye divvles!" Aw went forrad to Whitoth, geet loden't up, an' just as aw were comin deawn th' broo into th' turnpike road aw seed t' dhrove o' pigs passin t' lone bottom. Comin on to'ard 'em fro Facit there were a wild beast show, wi tuthri carryvans, an' two thumpin big elephants i' their stockin feet; an' just opposite me were o th' fair stalls an' shows on a piece ov oppen greaund. Just then a bobby-horse orgin, wi abeaut forty brass thrumpets in it inside, banged off at full cock, settin th' elephants agate o' dancin, an' in a twinkle th' pigs were off like wicksilver. One lot shoved straight forrad, between horse an' elephant legs, an' bowted toard Yorkshire; another lot turn't reaund o' their tails, upset t' dhriver, an' made for Rachda as hard as they could goo; another gang coome bangin up th' lone past me, an' there were no puncin 'em back noather; an' o t'other lot sprinted across th' fair-greaund, an' nipped up th' hill-sides as iv they'rn gooin wimberry getherin. O t' dhrove skriked an' squeal't wur nor a killin day, folk ran abeaut, cursin, sheautin, an' makin things wur, th' elephants danced an' jumped, aw stood at mi horse-yead to watch th' fun, an' th' owd Irishman sit him deawn on a flag, cobbed his long whip away, an' says "O Lard! what'll oi do! what'll oi do!" Aw co'd eaut to him, "Neaw, owd mon! aw thought it were aisy to dhroive pigs;" an' he sheauted back, "Ah, ye divvle! thread on a man bekase he's down. Sure, ye Whitwort people can thry pig-huntin on yer native hills at last. See the spotted darlins climbin! There niver was so much game up there afore, oi'll go bail. Sorra one o' ye will oi ever see more!" "Not iv tha keeps sittin theere," aw said. "Shap abeaut an' be afther 'em, whol there's some good to be done." "How'll oi go four ways at wanst?" he says. "Well, keep sittin theere an' whistle for 'em," aw said; "they'll happen come again when they'n had a bit ov a gallop reaund th' moor tops." So aw coome away, levin t' sthreets crommed wi laughin folk. Th' fair's nowheere neaw, afther t' pig race.

CHAP (*to hissel*).—It's a leausy world, is this!

SCRAWMER.—There'll be a bit o' roast pork i' Whitoth to-neet, then. Some o' thoose stone-delph lads 'll side tuthri spar-ribs eaut o' th' seet iv they getten a chance.

KERSHAW.—They'll ne'er have a betther chance, shuzheaw.

(*Enther woman*).

WOMAN.—Ben, aw do wish tha'd come wom. Eaur Liza's wur again.

CHAP.—Arta here again bi neaw! Am aw nevver to get a minute's quietness?

WOMAN.—Do come wi me, Ben. Aw ne'er geet a wink o' sleep last neet, an' aw'm fair done o'er. Aw want thee to sit wi th' chilt whol aw fot th' teawn's docthor to her. Aw'm fleyed hoo's shappin for th' breawn titus. Come!

CHAP.—Ger off wi thee an' put a powltice on, or else some goose-grase; it's nobbut a smatch o' cowd. There's naught but bother wi women an' childher.

WOMAN.—Come!

CHAP.—Will aw Owdham as like! Tha'll get cleauted iv tha comes rootin afther me again, aw con tell thee. Aw've no pleasur i' livin at this bat.

WOMAN.—Wilta gi me some brass, then. There's nowt for th' dinner, an' t' childher han done as long as they con. One o' th' neighbours did give Isral a butthercake this mornin, an' he brought it wom to divide wi t'other two; but it were nobbut a bite apiece, poor things! Come, Ben!

CHAP.—Tha's some wit comin to me for brass, shuzheaw. Hasn't ta dhrawn for thi weshin yet?

WOMAN.—Nowe. Come, aw know tha geet sixpence for gerrin yon lwod o' coals in at th' butcher's. Iv tha'll gi me twopence it'll do, just neaw.

CHAP.—Did ever onybody see sich a world as this! Be off, aw tell thee! Aw've no brass.

WOMAN.—Eh, Ben! surelee tha's ne'er spent o that i' ale.

CHAP (*gettin mad*).—Iv tha artn't off i' two minutes aw'll floor thee.

(*Woman puts appron to her e'en an' makes for th' dur*).

SAMMY.—A moment, please, missis! Just a moment!

(*Poo's his billycock off, dhrops a shillin in, an' howds it eaut to t'other fellahs*).

KERSHAW.—That's a good sthroke, Sammy. Aw'll be another.

HORSFALL.—Bring it this road. We'n do a shillin apiece chaps.

SCRAWMER, WHITEYEAD } Oh, ah!

Breawn titus, bronchitis.

SAMMY.—Thank you, gentlemen; thank you. See my poor woman; here is a little eleemosymary contribution——

KERSHAW.—Yer thee!

SAMMY.— ——which we hope will be of service to you. Five shillings, please.

(*Woman sobs.*)

CHAP.—Come, aw'll have a pint eaut o' that lot, Mary! (*Knocks.*)

HORSFALL.—Iv hoo gies thee a hawpny on't we'll have eaur brass back.

CHAP.—Ah! Just so!

(*Enther Lonlort.*)

LONLORT (*gawpin reaund*).—Were yo knockin?

HORSFALL.—Nowe, but tha con knock that chap on th' yed whol tha'rt here.

LONLORT.—What Cropper? Nay! aw met as weel cleaut a stoop.

(*Slutthers eaut again.*)

WOMAN.—Aw cawn't say a word to thank yo. Aw'm fair full. Aw con get some arrowroot neaw, an' some linseed, an' a loaf for t' childher. Thank yo! thank yo! an' God bless yo!

O ON 'EM.—Yo're welcome.

(*Woman runs eaut.*)

SCRAWMER.—Come, lads; let's be gettin a bit nar.

WHITEYEAD.—Ah, it's time we were shappin.

(*O sup up an' bowt.*)

CHAP (*left bi hissel*).—There's some set o' yo lot, by gum! Yo met be somebry! (*Looks into o th' pots to see iv there's ony bottoms left.*) Just as aw expected! They hannot left enough to fuddle a flee. It's a bonny hole ov a world is this!

(*Sits him deawn an' fo's asleep.*)

III.

It's a fairish poo fro Spotland Brigg to th' top o' Rooley's; but wi tuthri rests, a refreshin gill at Lone Yead, an' a dyel o' gruntin, t' wizart hunthers fund theirsel weel up th' moorside afther a while.

"Aw could do betther wi this hill-climbin iv there were ony deawn-broo in it," Scrawmer said, gaspin for wynt, for he were a bit touched i' th' chest, weighver-like. "It's wearisome to be olez slantin uparts, like a warp comin off a byem."

"What is that delightful perfume?" axed little Sammy, stoppin to sniff th' warm air blowin across t' moorside. "Quiet nectareous, really."

"Scented hair oil," Whiteyead towd him.

Stoop, post.

"Aw dun know what the hangment it is," Horsfall said, "but it's noane off Cape wool aw'll bet a hawpny. It's moore like all-spice an' cinnamon sticks, wi a bit o' grund ginger sprinkl't o'er 'em. Tha sells o maks o' stinks, Whiteyead; con ta kessen it?"

"Yeth bloom," Whiteyead says. "It needs no dhruggist to tell that. Wheere hast bin browt up?"

"Noane on th' moor-ends wur luck! Aw've olez lived i' back-yards an' up enthries, an' wortched among flannel-grase whol aw feel a bit sheepish mysel."

"Tha has had a bit ov a look o' one sin' Sammy clipped thee t'other day," Whiteyead towd him.

"Let Sammy a-be, wilta?" Kershaw said, pattin t' barber's back wi his greight hond. "Aw wain't have him put on. Sammy, tha'rt as nimble as a bantam to-day; tha's nipped up this broo like a fither. Aw reckon that comes o' livin upo bear's grase an' yure-pins."

"He, he!" Sammy laughed. "Very good, sir, very good!"

"We're noane aboon forty mile off th' 'Moorcock,' neaw, are we?" Scrawmer axed, rubbin his face. "We'n thravell't hawve road across t' world, welly, it looks to me, an' as dhry a gate as e'er aw let on. Con we lond theere this week, or heaw?"

"Tha'll see it dhirectly," Kershaw said. "Just o'er this next broo, an' then. Iv tha'd bin up here for stone an' engine-sleck as oft as me tha'd feel awom."

"Aw've ne'er bin afore, an' aw' s' come no moore yet a bit. Iv yo takken me a-walkin again it'll ha to be up th' cut-bank, or somewheere else where it's level."

"Comin no moore, saysta?" Horsfall co'd eaut. "Tha'rt as ill to plez as a mule-fitther 'at were lodgin i' Bury once. His lond-lady sent him a bill in at th' week end at fair made his yure ston up. 'Here! what done yo co this?' he says. 'Aw'm noane payin o that, nor th' hawve on't. Aw met eight as mich as a wild beast show! Heaw con yo reckon it up?"

T' londlady said, 'Well, pottatoes han gwone up yo known; fleaur's very dear, yo known; berm's like upo t' rise too, yo known; beef's a shillin a peaund, yo known; brass 'll hardly buy cabbitches, yo known; an' we'n welly as mich to pay for rates as rent i' this hole, yo known. So neaw yo han it.'

'Aw have that!' he says, 'an' aboon a bit. Well, aw'll pay this time, yo known, seein as it's yo, like, yo known, but aw'm comin no moore, yo known.'"

"He, he, he!" Sammy laughed. "Very good, sir, very good! Bona fabula."

"Howd!" Scrawmer co'd eaut, marchin a bit at th' front. "There's a heause yon hangin on a brooside, like a side o' bacon fro a hook. Is yon it, Kershaw?"

"Reet again, lad. There's nobbut one heause hereabeaut. Aw wondher iv they'n ony ale left."

"It'll be a rum un iv we'n to goo back to th' 'Kittlin' afore we con get a gill," Whiteyead says. "We'n had wit enough to pike as dhrufty a road as there is i' th' parish, shuzheaw. Done they ever have teetotal meetins up here, aw wondher? It's a rare shop for 'em"

"Aw've ne'er sin noane," Kershaw said. "It'd nobbut be time wasted iv they coome, for it'll want moore nor talk to stop some o' these quarry chaps fro fuddlin. We s' be likely to find th' ale-heause full on 'em neaw, wi bein Sethurday."

He were a bit mista'en theere, for they nobbut fund two, an' one o' them were asleep in a cheer bi t' kitchen fire. T'other sit near him, restin his bare arms on a little reaunt table, wi a quart jug an' a tot glass undher his nose. He stared hard at t' Rachda chaps whol they planted theirsel, geet summat to sup, an' ordher't some baggin to be shapped; fillin an' emptyin his glass once or twice, but sayin nowt. A big, sthrong, hardy fellah he looked; his singlet flyin oppen, coarse white shirt loase abeaut his bull neck, narrow leather belt reaund his middle, shoon an inch thick i' t' sole, an' a weather-blown, wholsome colour abeaut his skin 'at stamped him ov a different breed fro th' teawn-groon lads he gawped at.

"Is thi e'eseet middlin good?" Scrawmer axed him at last, weary o' bein looked o'er i' that shap.

Th' navvy filled an' emptied his glass, as iv he went bi machinery, an' had to sup every so oft whether he wanted or not, wiped his meauth wi a hond like a fairish sized ham, fowded his arms on th' table again, an' then fund time to say,

"Tidy, mate, tidy."

"It taks thee a good while to get a gradely seet, shuzheaw. Look at sombry else a bit for a change."

Th' navvy geet howd o' Scrawmer's thin, delicate hond, turnin it o'er in his own, where it looked like a white fire-breek in a buildher's hod, put it deawn, supped again, an' axed,

"D' *you* call yourself a man?"

"Aws' co noane o' misel nowt," Scrawmer says, "there's folk enoo for that job. Aw've a wife to keep, an' three childher at co'n me fayther, iv that'll do for thee."

Th' navvy said nowt, but sit whol it were time to fill his glass. Then, findin his pitcher empty, he says to hissel "The jug's off again," an' hommer't wi it on th' table, sheautin "Landlord! Landlord!"

Th' lonlort coome noane, so a young woman nursin a babby at t' other end o' th' kitchen filled t' jug an' set t' dhrinkin machine off again.

"Thank you, Matilda," th' navvy said when he'd supped once.

"Aw want summat moore nor thanks," t' young woman said, laughin. "Am aw to chalk it up to yo?"

"Book it to George," he says in his slow, heavy style.

"He's fast asleep an' happen wain't pay when he wakkens."

"Won't pay!" grunted th' navvy, wi summat like scorn in his face. "You don't know my mate. This is George's quart. If he don't pay I'll brek his head; and if he don't drink the slop I shall. Book it to George, girl."

"That's a new mak ov a partnership, owd mon," Whiteyead co'd eaut. "Tha sups an' he pays. He's a sleepin partner wi a wuther, is this. Aw dun' know heaw th' plan 'll act when yo're bwoth wakken at once—if yo ever are—but it's a tip-top dodge whol there's nobbut hawve o' th' firm on t' fuddle."

"You think so?" axed t' navvy, when he'd stared at Whiteyead abeaut two minutes. "You're a clever sort of gent, ain't you?"

"Cliver enough to set a quart on to oather thee or George, iv tha'll nobbut fo asleep a bit. Yo con ne'er count up to an odd un, aw know."

"Maybe," t' navvy says when he'd gien his slow tongue time to turn. He filled his glass again, shoved it toard 'em, an' said, "Take a drink, mateys."

"Nay! we s' nobbut be robbin thee," Horsfall towd him. "Iv tha'rt beaun to keep emptyin that tot o neet at this speed tha'll run short afore turnin eaut time."

"Drink, mate!" th' navvy said again, dhroppin his neighve on th' table wi a bang 'at made t' pots beaunce an' welly split th' wood. "We works hard and we drinks hard. Look here! This is George"—heighvin a finger like a clooas-peg to point him out—"my mate George. Look at him!" He turned to Scrawmer: "*George* is a man. So 'm I. We's Linc'shire boys; fenmen both. Linc'shire born, Suffolk reared; all round the blooming island since." It were time to empty his glass again, so he did it, an' went on: "Look at George, now. There's the man to fight, brek stone, or breed pups with any of ye." He put his hond undher t' bench, poo'd eaut a little King Charley spaniel, an' set it, wi it shinin silky yure, long ears, an' fithery tail, among th' ale pots, wheere it minced abeaut seechin a dhry spot for it dainty feet. "That's George's dawg."

"Come! that's a beauty," Horsfall brasted eaut, takkin t' little thing in his hond to see iv it marks were reet. "Aw've bred a tuthri o' these mysel, an' reckon to know a good un when aw see it. Why, this is woth mony a peaund. Will thi mate sell it, dost think?"

"Sell his dawg! No fear. This is all the same to George as 'Tilda's baby in the cradle yon'er is to her."

"Nay, it isn't, noather," t' young woman co'd eaut, busy among

her taythings. "We're noane havin that. It met seem yo bwoth betther iv yo'd get wed, an' spend yor brass o' somebry woth it."

"D'ye think so, girl? You're a clever sort of woman ain't you?"

"There's betther an' wur. Neaw, chaps, yor baggin's ready. Win yo come on to this t'other table?"

"Nay, we s' do here," Horsfall said. "We'll shift these pots an' then. Wilt have a bite wi us, mate?"

"I ain't done drinking, yet. My jug's off again, 'Tilda."

"Set another on to George," Whiteyead chuckl't, plantin hissel at t' back ov a lump o' cowd beef. "It's his turn. When will thi dhrinkin time be up?"

"He'll sit slotchin here whol eleven," Matilda said. "These two takken as mich fillin as a boiler. Done yo o tak sugar an' milk?"

"When we con get it," Scrawmer said; "but that's noane every week."

"Well, yo mun o help yorsel, an' iv yo're owt short yo'll happen speighk."

"My jug's off, 'Tilda."

"Yo mun wait a minute; there's t' chilt cryin."

Hoo ran across t' kitchen, rocked t' kayther a bit, an' then filled th' navvy his pot again.

"I pay for this," he says, pooin some coppers eaut; then he swigged another tot off an sattl't hissel deawn on th' table again.

"Tha'rt lettin thi mate off then, this time reaund?" Whiteyead axed.

"George pays for the next. If he don't drink it I will," th' navvy said. "Fair play among mates."

"Oh, ah! it's fair enough—iv he'll ston it. Tha pays for hawve o' t' dhrink an' sups t' lot."

"My name's Will Broxton, and I cares for nobody. Look at George! *He* cares for nobody—not a curse. Open to fight or wrestle any man; game to drink while the money lasts, game to work our share and no grumbling. Show me the man can stand up to Linc'shire Will!"

"Look this road," Kershaw said, his meauth full o' beef an' butther-cake. "Aw'll oather feight or wrostle thee for five shillin—neighves or clogs in as tha's a mind. Tha moan't gate braggin at that rate—but it's th' ale 'at's swaggerin aw reckon."

Th' navvy reighched across to feel at Kershaw's muscle, lookin weel at t' carther's brode back and solid body. "Your'e a man," he says, suppin once. "You're a man—but no match for Will Brox'on. Will you try a fall, matey?"

"Ony time when tha'rt sober; aw'll ha nowt to do wi thee whol tha'rt bermy. Tha's moore meauth nor merit, aw expect same as most on us."

Horsfall had put th' spaniel deawn when t' baggin were ready, an' it 'd bin friskin abeaut it sleepin maisther whol he'd reaused up a bit. He rowlt his heavy yead tuthri times, spread his arms wi a long grunt, oppen't two dull e'en, an' gawped abeaut him. He were a big, clumsy, black-yur't lump ov a chap, lookin as crammed an' awkart as his mate were quiet. He gav a bad-temper't stare o reaund him, laid howd o' th' ale-jug, filled t' glass, emptied it, sattl't back in his cheer an' gated snorin.

"Wake up, sleepyhead!" Broxton co'd eaut, shakin him up weel bi t' shooldher, an' at that George turned reaund on him middlin sharp, axin, "What d'ye mean, cuss you?"

"Wake up and show yourself to the gentlemen. We've company to-night, look ye. 'Tilda, the jug's off. You pays next, George."

"Do I. You're gassing again s'pose." He fixed his e'en on little Sammy, hawve geet up, an' sheauted, "Who are you, cuss you?"

"Samuel Brown, sir, please; barber of Rochdale, Lancashire," Sammy said, ceawerin into his nook, too freeten't for once to talk Latin.

"Barber," grunted George, sneerin. "Have I come to 'sociate with barbers?" He laid howd o' th' jug, fund it empty, banged it deawn an' turned on his mate like a mad bull. "Where's the beer, ye drunken sot?"

"This is your quart," Broxton says, beaut stirrin. George geet up an' fell forrad on t' top ov his mate, for he couldn't ston up, makin a blint sthroke or two wi his arms; so t'other laid howd on him, fot him a lusty cleaut or two on th' earhole, an' dhropped him into his cheer again, where George fell back fast asleep, wi t' little dog pyerchin on his knee.

"Keep quiet, sleepyhead," Broxton said, takkin his owd shop at th' table. "'Tilda, the jug's off."

"Tha's getten a crammed mak ov a mate, by gum," says Whiteyead. "Aw should goo noane on t' fuddle wi that mon. Breeten up, Sammy, lad! We shan't let him eight thee."

"All right, Mr. Whitehead; all right, sir! I am not afraid."

"Tha looks freeten't an' some ill too, whether tha feels so or not."

"It's only one of George's little ways," t' navvy said. "He wouldn't hurt a fly, poor fellow, but he was crossed in love, d'ye see, was my mate, and ye can't expect a man to tek that easy. When he crippled the foundryman at Brum he only meant it for a lark, and that was all lies about him splitting the sergeant's head with half a brick. George is a good pal." He supped once, an' turned to Kershaw: "Try a fall, mate; friendly."

"Aw'll ha nowt to do wi thee to-neet. Why, Scrawm, *tha'rt* lookin freeten't neaw. What's up?"

Scrawmer pointed to t' dur, his e'en startin eaut ov his yead. They o looked, an' seed a big white bull bitch come marchin in as iv o th' heause belonged to it.

"That's only my dawg," Broxton said, in his dull, slow fashion. He chirped, sang eaut, "Come, Sally, lass," an' Sally waddl't forrad on her bandy legs, jumped on to t' bench, an' sit deawn at t' side ov her maisther, makin Scrawmer hutch up eaut ov her road middlin sharp. Sally were a reglar beauty—red e'en, flappin ears, two front teeth just showin undher t' savage top lip, thick neck, big chest, an' curly legs. Hoo wore a leather collar set wi brass studs for ornament, an' looked o reaund t' table wi a mournful face, as iv to say, "Aw s' very like ha to bite some on yo afore so long, but there's no pleasur in it."

IV.

"Good dawg!" th' navvy said, rubbin her wi his greight hond. "This is the sort of friend for a man, gents."

"Oather thy taste or mine mun be wrong," Scrawmer grunted. "Thy mak o' mates 'll do noane at o for me. Is t' thing used to weighver beef? It's lookin at me in a hungry road."

"Arta sure it's a dog?" axed Whiteyead. "It looks moore o' th' dur knocker breed to me. Aw've ne'er sin as feaw a face as that eautside kest iron afore."

"Set him, Sally, !" Broxton said, catchin her bi th' collar; an' hoo put her back up, snarlin at t' dhruggist wi two rows o' sharp teeth i' full seet.

"Here, howd on!" Whiteyead co'd eaut, hutchin away. "Howd on, maisther! Aw'll poo it back, or apologise, or owt. Jump i' t' front o' me, Sammy, iv yon collar slips."

But Sammy were off. They went a-seechin him hawve an heaur afther an' fund him hud i' th' coal hole, but he took a dyel o' persuadin afore he'd go back. They'd to get th' navvy to shut his pet up in another reawm afore t' little chap durst foot up, but once he knew Sally were safe undher lock an' keigh he marched in as bowd as a sodier.

Broxton were dhroppin asleep o'er his ale, but wakken't up a bit when Sammy showed hissel. "Come in, matey; don't be afeared of a little dawg. Sally wouldn't hurt a fly."

"Hoo may be nowt mich at flee catchin," Scrawmer said; "th' question is, heaw fur con hoo be thrusted wi flesh meight?"

"Thy friends are o ov a very harmless breed to yer thee talk," Kershaw says. "It's rayther a pity their looks are so mich again 'em."

"Try a fall, now. Come!" said Broxton, gettin up an' catchin t' carther bi th' arm. "Any style ye likes. I'm the boy to wrestle!"

"Be quiet an' sit thee deawn, tha foo," Kershaw said. "It'll tak thee o thi time to wrostle wi th' ale tha's supped."

Ha'ever, Broxton were stupid, poo'd him off his shet, an' laid howd on him reaund th' middle. Matilda skriked eaut, co'in for t'other chaps to stop 'em, but as they o wanted to see th' sport they budged noane. Kershaw nobbut laughed o'er th' job, leet th' navvy rive at him a bit, an' then thripped him up, his yead comin again th' flags wi a bang.

"All right, matey," Broxton said, gettin up an' shakin hissel. "Shek hands. You're a man, you are, but it's lucky for ye George is asleep. 'Tilda, my jug's off."

"Yo'n had too mich as it is," Matilda towd him. "Yo mun be fuddl't, but yo're like as yo ne'er shown it."

"Fuddled with this slop?" t' navvy axed wi scorn, tossin another glass off. "What d'ye tek me for?" He crossed his arms on t' table again, sit quiet tuthri minutes, an' then said he'd sing 'em a song iv they'd let Sally eaut.

"Come on, Sammy!" Scrawmer said. "We'll be shappin off deawn t' broo iv that thing's comin back again."

"Sit down, mateys. Honour bright. How'd *you* like your little dawg shut in there by itself in the dark. *She'll* be quiet enough; no fear."

So Matilda oppen't t'other reawm dur, coome back wi Sally waddlin at t' front on her, an' t' doleful lookin craythur pyerch'd up bi it maisther again, nuzzlin in his hond, an' lookin a bit moore dismal nor common—very like t' poor thing's road o' showin it were plez't.

"Na then, lads! songs abeaut," Whiteyead says. "Shift these taythings, missis, bring us summat to sup, an' put it o deawn to George—he'll be wakkenin in a bit. Brast off, owd stone-clipper! What art beaun to sing?"

"Anything you likes, mate. I can sing anything. My name's Will Brox'on, and I cares for nobody."

"Heaw oft art beaun to tell us that?" Kershaw axed him. "Get forrad wi thi yeawlin."

Broxton supped once, sthroked his little dawg, crossed his arms afore him again, an' started in a voice 'at Scrawmer said were like thundher an' leetnin hawve mixed.

THE QUARRYMAN.

Oh! free is the life of a quarryman bold,
In heat of summer or winter's cold;
A lusty giant, all muscle and bone,
He delves his bread from the flinty stone.
Strike high, strike low;
Hammer away, boys, steady and slow!

The sturdy lark sings over his head,
He starts the hare from its dewy bed,
Sweet moorland flowers about him spring,
The winds come flying on scented wing.
Strike high, strike low;
Hammer away, boys, steady and slow!

He whirls his pick with shattering sweep,
He probes with his crow the fissure deep;
Carving the world into shelf and ledge,
Cleaving the hills with chisel and sledge.
Strike high, strike low;
Hammer away, boys, steady and slow!

Yes, free is the life of a quarryman bold,
Hurling the rocks like a Titan old;
Hard he toils and in toil shall die,
But his life is under the open sky.
Strike high, strike low;
Hammer away, boys, steady and slow!

"Hear, hear! Good do!" Horsfall said, whol they o rattl't their pots i' compliment to t' singer. "Santley's a foo to thee. Who's next? Come, Sammy, lad; dost know ony songs?"

"No, sir; thank you, sir. I am little fitted for laryngoscoptic exercises, and unacquainted with English verse. If you would like me to recite a few hextameters, or penameters, of course that would be different."

"Sammy, tha'rt a terrible humbug," Whiteyead says. "Tha'll come to a bad end yet wi thi lies. Tha knows no moore abeaut 'hextameters,' as tha co's 'em, nor this bull-dog, but tha will keep thryin to chet folk wi thi fag-ends eaut o' t' dictionary, forgettin 'at aw've had to study Latin a bit, mysel. For shame o' thi face!"

"He, he!" chuckl't Sammy, wi a very sickly grin. "You will have your little joke, Mr. Whitehead."

"Tha'rt hardly fit to come eaut wi dacent folk, Sammy, an' that's t' top an' bottom on it. Iv tha doesn't behave thysel we'll lev thee on th' moor-top, among t' boggarts. They'll shave thee! Neaw, Kershaw, thee give us a yelp."

"Nay! Aw'm below singin pitch yet. There's these two chaps i' th' nook—cotton an' woollen. They should shap to turn eaut some mak o' stuff between 'em."

"It'd nobbut be shoddy, iv we did," Scrawmer said. "Aw'll poo a yard or two off mi own loom, as yo're o so freeten't, an' yo con join i' th' chorus."

"Right you are, mate! Keep the ball a-rolling."

"Thee keep fast howd o' thi dog, an stop that fro rowlin. Its a dyel nar me nor aw like, an' iv it doesn't happen to fancy th' tune it met turn awkart. Some dogs han noane mich ear for music."

"Wouldn't hurt a fly, tell ye!" Broxton said, suppin once again. "Not a quieter little dawg in England."

Scrawmer wagged his yead, as iv he'd some deaubts abeaut that, and brasted off wi

BILLY WINKER.

Billy Winker dhrove a cart
For a brewer deawn at Shay;
Wi full ale barrels he'd start
On a journey every day;
Empty kegs he'd get fro some,
But—o th' shameful tale to tell—
When wi th' empties he geet wom
He were oft brimful hissel.

Chorus *(slow music)*:
Oh, Billy! What a mon!
Life's last bodle soon tha spent;
Neaw tha's supped o th' ale tha con;
It were gettin time tha went.

Customers, ne'er thinkin wrong,
Used to give him 'leawance glasses,
Mild or bitther, wake an' sthrong,
Every mak fro Coop's to Bass's;
Winker olez sattl't th' lot,
Owt were reet his spark to sleck;
Jug or bottle, glass or pot,
He could empty deawn his neck;
Oh, Billy! &c.

Bill grew fat, an' Bill grew fatther,
Whol his nose wi shame went pink;
He'd forgetten t' taste o' watther
Sin' he'd taen to mix his dhrink;
So it is bad habits floor
Th' best o' folk 'at live bi sweat;
Iv he'd stuck to milk it's sure
Th' fellah could ha bin here yet,
Oh, Billy! &c.

Billy's maisther, soft i' th' yead,
Co'd his mon in one fine day;
"Here's nine gallon, lad," he said,
"Tak it wom—tha's nowt to pay.
Tha con swallow weel, aw think,
Or tha'rt ill belied bi folk;
Set thysel to side this dhrink,
An' aw'll time thee, just for th' joke."
Oh, Billy! &c.

Billy thanked him wi a grin,
T' barrel on his shooldher cocked,
Made for wom, an' safely in,
Front an' back his durs he locked,
Tapped his bung, an' deawn he sit,
Bucklin to a neet's hard wark;
Th' ale so fast began to flit
It were welly gwone bi dark.
Oh, Billy! &c.

Mornin coome—bi nine o' t' clock
Back wi t' barrel Billy went,
Stonnin steady as a rock,
Fillin th' spot wi bermy scent.
"Done bi neaw!" his maisther cries;
"Billy Winker, tha'rt a cure!"
"Done! Why, mon, to tell no lies,
For th' supper aw'd to fot some moore."
Oh, Billy! &c.

"Put thi barrel deawn i' th' nook,"
T' brewer said; "tha's sattl't me!"
Bill ne'er shapped to tak his hook,
But stood his greaund wi twinklin e'e.
"What art stoppin theere for? Bowt!"
T' maisther sheauted in a crack;
"Come!" says Billy; "is there nowt
At o for bringin th' barrel back?"

Chorus *(solemn)*:
Oh, Billy! What a mon!
Life's last bodle soon tha spent;
Neaw tha's supped o' th' ale tha con;
It were gettin time tha went!

"Tha's sung th' navvy asleep, shuzheaw," Horsfall said, lookin at his watch. "Aw'll tell yo what, chaps; iv we're beaun reaund bi Norden it's hee time we made a start."

"Bi gum! aw'd clen forgetten t' wizart," Whiteyead co'd eaut. "We s' have a job to get across t' moor i' th' dark, but we'll be noane licked neaw."

They gated shappin for off. T' navvy's yead had dhropped deawn on his arms, but he looked up when he yerd 'em stirrin.

"Not going, mates, are ye?"

"Yigh, we mun be off," Kershaw said, gettin up. "It's gettin toard bedtime. Tha met find a betther road o' spendin thi Sethurdays nor this. We're noane born to make ale barrels ov eaursel."

"Watch 'em, Sally!" Broxton grunted, an' deawn went his muzzy yead again. Th' bulldog beaunced forrad an' faced th' Rachda chaps, legs set for a spring, every tooth in it yead showin, red e'en afire.

They o dhropped into their shets again, middlin sharp; th' londlady stood across th' kitchen watchin 'em, too freetent to stir or speighk, an' th' lonlort showed hissel at th' dur, just gettin wom fro th' teawn, but poo'd up when he seed t' dog.

"This is a bonny come off," he sheauted. "What han yo chaps agate?" He chirped at Sally, an' snapped his fingers, but Sally budged noane. "Neaw, Bill!" he sheauted again. "Wakken up an' shift this dog. It's a rum un iv aw cawn't get into mi own heause."

"There's a good chance for George to wakken neaw," Whiteyead chuckl't, rowlin abeaut on th' bench, howdin his sides. "It's

mony a bakin day sin aw were in at sich a spree as this. We're reet here whol mornin, seeminly."

He lifted his walkin-stick to prod George i' th' ribs, but Sally snarled at him in a road 'at made him dhrop his hond again.

"This is awful!" little Sammy groan't. "For heaven's sake don't move again Mr. Whitehead." Sweat were runnin fro undher t' barber's billycock, but he dursen't shift a finger to wipe it off.

"What's t' Latin for bull pup?" axed Horsfall, leetin his pipe as iv he myent stoppin a bit. "Tha'll ha time to give us a tuthri o' thoose pennyomethers as tha co's 'em; or hawpny uns met happen do."

"Aw'm gettin stowed o' sittin here," Whiteyead says. "There seems to be nowt for it but givin Sammy to th' dog, an' slippin eaut whol it's busy eightin him. We could shap to get wom bi bedtime then. What saysta, Sammy? Tha'rt nobbut little, an' wouldn't feel it worryin thee hawve as long as we should; beside, it 'd be a good job for that fawse assistant o' thine iv tha ne'er went back. Come, foot up! Dulce et decorum est per Sally mori."

"Give o'er plaguin t' little chap, Whiteyead," Kershaw said. "Aw wain't have him fleyed to t' dyeath. There's beaun to be an end o' this job one road or t'other."

He geet up, takkin no notice o' th' snarlin dog, laid howd o' th' navvy an' gav him a shake 'at wakken't him weel an' soon.

"What's the game, matey?" Broxton grunted, his hond gooin to th' quart jug bi force ov habit.

"Tell that dog to lie deawn, iv tha doesn't want it lamin."

"Laming! What, lame my dawg!" He beaunced up lookin awkart.

"Ah! an' thee too iv aw've ony moore bother wi thee," Kershaw said. "Aw'll cob thee George in, beside, whol aw'm agate. Tell that bitch to lie deawn, tha foo."

"All right, matey," t' quarryman said, sittin him deawn, his heavy yead hangin forrad. "Come in, Sally. Good dawg! My name's Will Brox'on, and I cares for nobody. I works hard and I drinks hard. Who sings next?"

But they were waitin noane, noather for singin nor nowt else. As soon as th' dog shifted they were off in a rook. They yerd th' navvy mutther, "'Tilda, my jug's off," as they squoze through th' dur, an' a minute afther they were a good piece deawn t' moorside. It were a fine, clear neet; no moon, but lots o' breet stars shinin, an' a cool sweet wind fluttherin among rushes an' yeth beds.

"What foos we are, sittin stoved-up i' yon hole o neet wastin sich weather as this," Scrawmer grumbl't.

That were *his* opinion; but when th' lonlort turned t' quarrymen eaut at eleven o' t' clock Broxton grunted to his mate,

"Have you enjoyed yourself, George?"

"Ain't you gassed enough for one night?" sociable George axed, turnin on him wi a savage look. "*I've* been right enough."

"Had a pleasant evening, ain't we old chum?" t'other maundher't. "Could have done with another jug if we'd had time. I always likes you to enjoy yourself, George, and forget as you was crossed in love."

"Shut your face, cuss you!" George snapped; an' they sleauched deawn th' hill toard their lodgins, wi t' little dog barkin an' friskin reaund 'em, an' th' big un waddlin slow an' quiet at it maisther's heel.

V.

Th' wizart went to bed abeaut ten o' t' clock that Sethurday neet, as thrade were a bit slack. He nobbut addl't eighteenpence afther baggin-time—a sixpenny papper to shift blackjacks, an' a shillin charm to make sure o' good harvestin weather—so he geet weary o' brunnin candles an' coals for nowt. He hadn't bin laid deawn mony minutes afore he yerd some chaps talkin eautside, an' in a bit there coome a thunge on th' dur as iv somebry 'd ta'en a run punce at it. Th' owd chap lee still, an' there coome another thunge 'at made th' heause rock, an' next minute hawve a breek coome smashin through t' window.

"It's time to be stirrin," th' wizart thought; "aw met as weel be kilt as let 'em knock th' heause deawn." He put th' window up an' popped his grey yead eaut i' th' starleet very carefully.

"Is there somebry theere?" he says.

"Dost feel some deaubt abeaut it?" Horsfall axed him, "or mun we punce th' dur in just to make sure?"

"What dun yo want here at this time o' neet?"

"We wanten some conjurin. Art tha t' chap 'at does it?"

"Ah, it's me; but aw'm shut up for to-neet. Yo mun come sanner nor this—it's too lat to gate neaw."

"Bring a lot o' yon boudhers here, lads," Horsfall said, "We'n soon oppen t' shop for him."

"Here! give o'er!" th' wizart splutther't. "Aw'll come deawn iv yo'll be quiet."

"Aw thought tha'd come," says Whiteyead.

"Aw'd ne'er no deaubt abeaut it mysel," Horsfall said. "But what are we to do wi him neaw we'n getten him?"

"We con freeten him a bit," Kershaw said, "or punce him a bit oather; aw'm noane particlar which. But he's nobbut a little wakely chap—we munnot hurt him."

"We'll match Sammy to feight him," Scrawmer says. "They'll be like two bantams on a hay-moo. Howd! he's comin. Aw con yer his clogs cluntherin on th' stairs."

They yerd th' owd fellah pottherin abeaut makin a leet; then he set th' dur oppen an' they o marched in, Sammy goin first becose he'd a new billycock on an' favvor't Lord Nelson a bit; an' they planted theirsel where they could, on cheers, table, an' boxes.

"What is it yo wanten?" axed th' wizart, gawpin at 'em wi his blear't e'en, an' lookin nobbut hawve wick, he were so thin, white, an' thrembly.

"Tha should know that beaut tellin aw sh' think," Kershaw said, "or else thy job's noane mich good."

"Yo looken as iv yo'd com'n eaut o' mischief, but that's o aw con make on yo."

"We wish to see a little magic please," Sammy said. "We are all anxious to learn something about it, especially me, for I do something in the black art myself."

"Tha never says!" Scrawmer brasted eaut. "An' what's that?"

"Hair dyeing."

"Oh! aw see."

"Hast getten ony o' thi imps abeaut to-neet?" Horsfall axed. "Let's see hawve a dozen on 'em to be going on wi, an' tell us what they're co'd."

Th' wizart grinned, but said nowt, an' sit him deawn on th' bottom step o' t' stairs.

"That's reet, owd brid! Make thysel awom," Whiteyead says, lookin into a lot a jars an' bottles; for he wortched in a chemical wareheause, an' knew a bit abeaut dhrugs, an' he were curious to see what th' owd humbug sowd. He fund nowt woth mentionin nobbut grund ollum, gum arabic, lumps ov unmade rosin, an' some soft swop in a bucket. "Is this what tha makes thi pills on?" he axed, but th' wizart nobbut grinned. "It's a rare chep stock-i'-thrade," Whiteyead went on when he'd bin o reaund. "Onybody 'at bought thee eaut for five shillin ud loise brass. Tha'rt noane hawve fitted up for thi business. There should be a skellinton propped again yon wole, facin th' dur, an' tuthri stuffed bats an' eawls. Tha wants a big iron pot i' th' middle here, stonnin upo three long legs, an' some rowls o' white papper on t' dhresser, to look like law-writins. Then tha should have a bason o' red ink on t' counther, to make folk think it were blood, an' a odd theegh-bwon, or skull, or so, lyin abeaut. It'll cost thee five peaund at lest to set up i' dacent style, wi owt like a respectable plant."

"It'll do weel enough for me as it is," th' conjuror says.

"Nay! aw'd tak a bit moore pride i' mi job nor that iv aw sowd magic," says Whiteyead. "Nobry could tell tha were i' th' business at o bi th' look o' things here. Wheere's t' black cat, 'at should olez bi sittin on th' table sendin sparks eaut ov it e'en?

Theegh-bwon, thigh-bone.

Heaw dost shap to get on beaut havin a three-foot ring painted on th' flags, an' wheere's thi conjurin pow wi a bit o candle on th' end? Tha looks to ha nowt i' th' shape ov a thriangle abeaut th' hole; to say nowt abeaut t' five-legged whelp swimmin i' whisky, an' th' long black geawn wi a red linin 'at everybody should don afore meddlin wi spirits fro th' next world. Dost think they'll tak ony notice ov a chap in a fustian jacket wi horn buttons?"

"Tha seaunds to be weel up at this job," Spitfire said, gapin hard. "Tha's bin in it thysel, happen. Aw wish yo leatheryeads ud goo an' let me shap off to bed."

"What the hangment han we com'n here for?" Scrawmer co'd eaut. "It's as dhry as a meetin abeaut politics."

"Aw'm welly asleep, mysel," Horsfall said. "We may as weel bowt, an' let this fawse thradesman pyche upstairs again."

"What did yo expect?" axed Kershaw. "Aw thought it were a foo ov a job when we set off; but yo would come. Wakken up, Sammy, lad; tha'll rowl off that stoo in a minute."

"Thank you, sir; thank you," Sammy said, hawve asleep. "Little more off the back, please? Yessir."

"Tha'll be off t' back onto th' floor, aw tell thee, iv tha worts abeaut that road," Kershaw towd him; an' heighvin Sammy up wi one hond an' t' stoo wi t'other, he balanced th' barber again t' wole. "Iv tha breighks thi neck we s' ha to carry thee wom, an' aw've done wark enough for one day."

"Yo'n brokken my chamber window," th' wizart said. "Heaw's that beawn to be getten in again?"

"Well, there's different roads o' fettlin windows," Whiteyead says. "It 'd be a good plan to ston on th' harstone i' thi shirt at midneet, swing a length o' blazin pitch-rope reaund thi yead, an' sing 'Dickory, dickory dock' nine times wi thi teeth shut. That should fot it. Or tha met level some wayther eaut to th' reet thickness, wait whol it sets, an' then cut it eaut wi t' sithers, an' put it in edge up. Or get a plumber's lad up fro Norden; he'd shap it in abeaut two days. First he'd come wi a putty knife, an' scrape for hawve an heaur reaund th' frame; then he'd ha to go back for his two-foot, an' when he'd brought that an' measur't up he'd ha' to start again to fot his glass; then he' find hissel beaut putty, an' have another thravel for that, an' at th' finish it's ten to one his quarrel ud be cut a sixteenth too narrow, an' he'd ha' to gate at th' beginnin again. But he'd shap it i' time."

"Tha seaunds to have a dyel a foreseet," says th' wizart; "but aw s' ha' th' window to pay for mysel aw yer."

"Put it among thrade losses," Scrawmer said. "Iv Sammy had been wakken we'd a getten him to charm it in wi a bit o' Latin. Con ta conjure us a saup o' wom-brewed up, owd brid? This magic's taydious."

Pyche, to go furtively. *Worts*, falls to one side.

"There should be some somewheere," th' wizart says. He rooted in a cubbort undher t' stairs an' pood eaut a hawve gallon bottle an' some gill pots.

"Come! tha'rt shappin neaw," Kershaw said, rubbin his honds. "There's some wit abeaut this mak o' magic. Here aw'll burl eaut for thee."

"It's a rare top on," Horsfall said, smackin his lips as t'carther sent a breet yollow sthrem splashin into th' gill pots. "Wakken up, Sammy, lad!"

"Next, please," murmur't Sammy.

"Tha'rt t' next aw tell thee. Wakken up lad, an' taste; an' he clapped him seaundly on th' back, makin Sammy snore like a brass thrombone.

"Good health, wizart," says Whiteyead. "Aw reckon there's no brimstone abeaut this, is there?"

"Nowe; it's my own brewin," th' owd chap said. "Aw'll have a saup mysel, aw think, iv there's another pot." He rooted i' th' cubbort again, an' coome back wi a bason. "Aw mun use th' milk bowl; my milk chap's ne'er co'd to-neet."

"Tha should charm him different to so," Kershaw said. "Bring thi bowl this road, an' thry to make thysel awom as weel as tha con. Tha'rt welcome to owt there is, an' iv aw'd a shive o' cheese an' brade aw'd gi thee some."

"Iv tha wants summat t' eight tha should ha' spokken," says th' wizart. "Aw'd gated thinkin yo'd noane on yo wit enough to wag a spoon; but yo are wick, it seems. Side yor cups off that table, an' poo it this road a bit."

He limped to his cubbort again, brought eaut a lump o' cheese, a fresh-boil't pestil, some cake-brade, an' bakstone moufins; an' mended t' look o' th' table rarely.

"Things are lookin up!" says Horsfall. "Come on, lads! Wakken that barber."

Sammy soon wakken't when he yerd th' knives an' plates rattlin, an' he played as good a stick at th' eightin as ony on em.

"Tha'rt a rare owd thrump, wizart," Scrawmer said, "an' here's luck to thee. We wouldn't ha punced th' dur iv we'd known."

"It's reet enough," th' wizart says. "Aw like a bit o' company neaw an' again; but yo'n no need to knock quite as hard next time. Aw'll have a saup moore ale wi yo."

"What! hasta supped o that bi neaw?" Kershaw said, fillin th' milk-bowl up again. "Tha mun be careful, tha knows; it'll do noane for a conjuror to get fuddl't."

"This'll hurt nobry; it's nobbut good maut an' hops. Here's to yo, lads! It's like owd times wi me to-neet. It's mony a year

Burl, pour. *Moufins*, muffins.

sin' aw gav a party afore." Th' owd chap had breeten't up wondherfully, an' his little black e'en twinkl't like candles in a dhraught.

"Tha's bin a middlin lively customer i' thi time, aw shouldn't wondher," Horsfall said. "At ony rate tha'rt weshed eaut enough neaw."

"Aw've sin a dyel i' mi time," th' wizart says, "an' life's noane bin o curran loave an' thraycle toffy wi me; but we're noane grumblin, yo known—we're noane grumblin."

"That's reet," Whiteyead says. "Tha'll shap to addle a livin whol folk getten o'erstocked wi wit, an' that wain't be just yet. There'll be tuthri bowstheryeads up here, aw reckon?"

"One or two. Iv some on 'em could tell what aw think abeaut 'em aw should be loisin their custom. It's quare heaw touchous empty-yeaded folk are abeaut bein thought foos."

"There's naught quare abeaut it," Horsfall said. "It wants no conjurin to riddle that eaut. Gawmless folk con see o reaund their own little minds, an' it ne'er sthrikes 'em 'at there's bigger rings nor their own. Heaw should it? A good job for thee, too, iv tha's to get thi livin bi sellin slutch."

"Well, happen it is; but aw cawn't ston foos, whether aw've to get mi livin eaut on 'em or not. Aw thought yo were summat o' that mak when yo coome ruggin me up."

"But tha were cheted, tha sees," Scrawmer said. "We're a middlin fawse lot when we're reckon't up. What saysta, Sammy?"

"Oh! yes, sir; certainly, sir. Mens sana in corporation sano."

"What breed ov a cowt's that?" axed th' wizart, wi a pityin look at th' little barber. "Yo'd betther get him toard wom: th' ale's getten howd on him."

"Not at all, sir," Sammy said. "I am as fresh as a daisy, please."

"Or new-mixed lother," Whiteyead put in.

"Sammy's a betther conjuror nor thee, wizart, so tha's no need to curl thi nose at him. He's pow'd tuthri o' these chaps to sich a tune 'at aw'll be hanged iv aw knew 'em again—nay! their mothers would'nt ha known 'em."

"Pardon me, Mr. Whitehead, please. Allow me to understand my own business, will you be good enough? I repeal your insinuations."

"Nay! its hee time to be off iv *thar't* gettin mad," Scrawmer said, laughin to see th' little barber sthrut reaund in a temper. "It's a good job there's no razzors abeaut."

"Ah, we'd betther be gooin, lads," said Kershaw. "It'll soon be Sunday. Done yo ever come o'er to Rachda, owd un?"

"Neaw an' again."

Curran loave, currant bread. *Gawmless*, dull-witted.

"Well, yo mun look us up some time."

"Done yo fly o'er on th' brush steighl, or heaw?" Whiteyead axed.

"Nay, aw mostly walk, iv aw miss catchin th' bus," th' wizart said. "My flyin days are o'er. Well, good neet to yo. Co in again iv yo getten up this road."

So they left him, an' thrail't deawn between thorn hedges to Norden, an' across th' quiet fields toard wom. They ne'er seed th' owd wizart again, but he potther't abeaut tuthri year longer, makin a fair livin to th' last eaut o' th' rook o' foos reaund him, an' then he deed, an' they made reawm for him i' th' dirt; so there were an end to th' Norden magic, for he'd no childher to turn his business o'er to, an' ne'er had a prentice (an' could ha' teighched him nowt iv he'd getten one), an' there were nobry else i' th' neighbourhood 'at could tak howd o' th' job. They looken to ha' shapped as weel beaut him as wi him, for owt aw con see, an' iv th' owd lad were to come back neaw aw deaubt he'd find it hard scrattin. He welly made a livin eaut o' boggarts, but they're mostly dyead neaw, an' nobry's fleyed on 'em; love pills are noane wanted, for we're o too busy makin brass to bother wi sich foolish wark as cwortin; an' iv there is an odd neck or two brokken, or yead cracked, it's noane wi conjurin. Folk wishen no harm to one another neaw. We liven i' brotherly love, takken good care to help one another, thinken 'at th' world were ne'er made just for one chap to live an' dee in, say'n some prayers mornin an' neet, an' gwone to sarvice twice on a Sunday; an' so everything's gooin on o reet.

Brush steighl, brush handle.

MENDIN DEGGER.

I.

Ben Simpson an' me happen't to have a bit o' business i' th' teawn one neet, an' as we were gooin through St. Mary's Gate aw seed a steel plate ov Edwin Long's grand picther, "Diana or Christ," hangin in a shop window. Aw co'd Ben to look at it, tellin him aw'd sin th' paintin i' t' Manchester Exhibition, an' thought this were a very good copy.

"O reet!" he says, "but let's see what this wackerin creawd's doin first;" so we went on three durs further, where a lot o' folk stood starin at a 'lusthrated newspapper sheet, full o' murdhers, robberies, an' prize-feights, printed off rough-cut wood blocks. We soon had enough o' that cheerful seet, an' turn't back to th' picther, gettin it o to eaursel, for nobry seemed to notice it.

"Eh, that's nice!" Ben says. "What's it o abeaut? Let's see. That young woman wi th' bonny face—sithee what e'en!—has bin gettin into throuble some road. That redmad powfag readin th' papper to her 's had summat to do wi 't. He's a tale-tellin tit, that is! Aw could like to sthrike twelve on his whirlbwons wi mi new clogs! Th' owd priest's in at it, too, aw'll bet—that mon wi th' long byert an' t' tub-gath reaund his yead! What's her sweetheart agate? He's some bits ov unmade rosin, or summat, i' one hond, an' looks freeten't."

"That's incense. He wants her to cob it into that blazin pot, sithee. Iv hoo doesn't they'll tak her fur back into th' circus an' set t' lions to worry her."

"Oh, aw see!" Ben says, scrattin his yead. "That insenses me into o th' job. This 'll be th' gaffer sittin so smush in his cheer. He's a rare muscle! It's rushbearin wi 'em, seeminly, bi th' garlans they're heighvin abeaut. Look what a yeadpiece that sodier's wearin—him next to th' nigger; it's like a 'lecthroplated taypot wi th' bottom knocked eaut. They'n built their theaythre weel upo th' bias, shuzheaw; there's shets o t' road up, too, same as there should be for comfortable seein. Dost myen to say folk had ever ony plezur i' wearin thoose hemlets, or whatever they co'd 'em, on their yeads?"

"Nay! it's no use axin me."

Insenses me, gives me an insight. *Gaffer*, principal.
Smush, smart.

"They'd be a greight weight, or it's a fizzer to me, to say nowt o' th' sceawrin they'd want to keep 'em shiny. A Scotch cap licks 'em into fits!"

"But it's noane as good to feight in."

"A chap's no need to lap his yead wi boiler plates to goo a-feightin. Were their iron clooas fitted up wi safety valves, dost think?"

"Aw should say not."

"Why! there's one o' thoose lasses playin two flutes at once! Aw seed a cadger thryin that gam wi two tin whistles a bit sin', but aw ne'er lippen't they used to do it i' ancient times. What shall aw larn next!"

Just then a chap coome up wi his nose in a pocket-book an' banged again me, nearly knockin me o'er.

"Beg pardon!" he co'd eaut. "Hello, Weighver! An' is that thee, Simpson! What the hangment are yo stonnin theere for, blockin o th' road up?"

"Look where tha'rt gooin," aw said, a bit mad, for aw care noane to have other folk meddlin wi mi ribs. "Lev thi wark at th' shop, an' then thi e'en 'll be useful for summat else eautside."

It were a chap aw'd known fro bein a schoolad. He'd scraped his road into a biggish grocery business, an' did middlin weel eaut on 't; but he'd ha made brass at ony job, for wark were o he thought abeaut. Soon an' late he were scrattin away, like a clemmed hen among screenins, gettin o he could eaut ov his men an' payin 'em as little as they'd wortch for. He were co'd Degger for a byname, fro a thrick he had o' dampin his shop-floor wi a waytherin-can; an' he were olez talkin or thinkin abeaut cotton, as he'd a dyel o' brass eaut i' Limited shares.

"Aw didn't do it o' purpose, mon," Degger said, sidin his book away. "Aw were just lookin what mi empties fot last year, as aw've some to sell. T' market's dhroppin again, bi th' papper."

"Let it dhrop," says Ben.

"But th' bank rate keeps gooin up."

"Let it!" Ben says again. "Iv it gwoes as hee as Professor Baldwin an' ne'er comes deawn again it matthers nowt to me."

"Are yo beaun Spotlan road on?" Degger axed. "Come on, then. What are yo gawpin reaund here for?"

"Studyin human nathur," aw towd him. "Sithee at o yon folk squeezin to look at common newspapper blocks, wi no e'en i' their yeads to see a grand picther like this."

"Be hanged to picthers!" Degger says. "Aw've summat else to think abeaut. They'n sattl't that Mitchell Hey sthrike, aw yer. Iv it'd bin me th' weighvers ud ha getten no moore, sthrike or no sthrike."

Fizzer, astonisher. *Lippen't*, thought.

"That's reet!" Ben said. "They'll nobbut be settin up carriages, or buyin property, or some mak o' nonsense. Aw'm towd they'n getten as mich as a farthin a cut put on, o at once. Mich iv it doesn't ruinate some on 'em."

Degger stared at him, hardly knowin whether to laugh or cry, for he's a poor un at seein jokes.

We were passin th' bill-postin board at t' top o' Blackwayther, when aw catched seet ov a railway bill abeaut Sethurday thrips to Windhermere for four shillin.

"Neaw, Ben!" aw said, stoppin him. "We were talkin t'other neet abeaut havin a jaunt somewheere to. What saysta iv we gwone this weekend?"

"Oh! aw'm gam."

"Hollinoth's cheper," Degger said, readin th' bill o'er. "There'll be a dyel ov expense beside th' railway ticket—dinner, an' baggin, an' sichlike. It'll make a hole into hawve a sovereign, that will!"

"Pluck up an' come wi us," Ben said. "There'll be plenty gooin fro Mitchell Hey afther this rise, an' iv they con afford it tha con. It's aboon thirty year sin' we'd a day off together."

"Ah! go wi us," aw chim't in. "We'll teighch thee some wit afore tha comes back."

"It's a good while sin' aw'd a holiday, for sure," Degger said, considherin like. "Aw cawn't see heaw it's to be shapped. There'll be nowt at o done at yon shop iv mi back's turn't."

"Well, iv it's beaun to warsen thee tha'd best stop awom," Ben towd him. "Iv thi honds misthrist thee as ill as tha does them there mun be a smart gang on yo when yo're o together."

"Let's see. Aw met happen get some disceaunt off three tickets iv aw geet 'em o at once."

"Get mine an' welcome," aw said.

"Same here," Ben says.

"Howd off! Yo'll pay noane at that bat. Con yo get three moore to goo, an' aw'll write for six tickets? We con make a bit that road."

"Get 'em to put us a peigh saloon on, and ston us a posnetful ov ale apiece at Lankesther," Ben said.

"Iv tha wants moore passengers tha mun get 'em thysel," aw towd th' grocer. "We're noane beawn huntin thravellers reaund th' teawn just to save thee a shillin or two. Iv tha'rt willin to come same as other folk we'll tak thee; iv not, stop awom."

"Well we s' see," Degger says. "It's a dyel o brass. Aw cawnt see mi road yet."

When he left us aw said to Ben: "Aw nobbut wish he would come wi us. A day off wi two dacent sensible chaps like us cawn't

Peigh, pea.

hurt him, an' met do him o' dyel o' good. Aw dar say th' poor fellah's wur nor he would ha bin iv he'd had a betther example set him."

"There's summat i' that," Ben says. "We con happen mend him a bit. There's nowt done beaut thryin, shuzheaw. 'Thry, thry, thry again!' says Shakspere."

"Tha myens Byron."

"Well, it's one on 'em at onyrate. Ah! we'll have a shot at mendin Degger iv he comes; but it's nobbut thus-an'-so wi him."

Aw ne'er expected th' grocer turnin up; but he did, for we fund him on th' station platform i' good time on t' Sethurday mornin, an' bi hawve-past six we were bowlin away toard t' north. A dull cleaudy mornin, shappin for weet, were th' best thing t' weather clerk could do for us; but as we geet reaund Ashoth Moor into th' Irwell valley we fund th' day breetenin up rarely. Through sthragglin Yeawood an' thrivin Bury, dingy Black Lone an' Bradley Fowt, past Darcy Lever, wi it bits o' green counthry an' pratty crotchet-worked spire, into dismal Bowton station, where nobry ever gwoes beaut bein forced. Forrad again, weather an' scenery mendin together, through Chorley an' Leyland to preaud Preston.

"It's a nice shop, this," Ben says, as we rode through t' park an' crossed th' brode river. "They con afford to plant threes on th' railway bankin here, an' float abeaut i' cockboats. What dost think abeaut this park, Degger?"

"Wha?" Degger said, lookin up fro his newspapper. "Park! Oh! we'n getten to Preston, aw see. Neaw, con onybody tell me what they're lettin this good lond lie empty for, so near two railroads an' wi o this waythor hondy? Aw ne'er seed a betther plot i' mi life for settin tuthri facthries on."

He fell back on his market reports again, an' we leet him a-be. Ben fund time to slip eaut to th' refreshment reawm, comin back wi a bottleful o' rum an' milk an' pooin his face to some tune.

"Aw'm poison't!" he co'd eaut, dhroppin into his shet again. "It'll be a warnin to me will this."

"What's to do?"

"This comes o' gettin up so soon! Aw've getten th' first gill dhrawn this mornin, an' it's bin stonnin i' th' pipes o' neet."

He gurgl't in his throat, an' kept grumblin as we went forrad bi Barton, Garstang, Bay Horse, an' Galgate, little counthry villages dotted abeaut brode sweeps o' meadow lond, rich wi wood an' brook, say o' one side, Yokshire hills on t'other, on to ancient Lankesther, bowd an' breet on it hee pyerch o'er th' sauty Lune."

"We'll just have a taste neaw to keep th' cowd eaut," Ben said, hondin his bottle reaund. "Here, Degger! sup once."

Sauty, salty.

Degger were busy addin sums up in his pocket-book. Ov o th' fine views we'd passed—wood, hill, fielt, an' sthrem—sin' levin Preston, he'd ne'er looked at one. He took th' bottle an' tasted, but slutther't o eaut again lookin middlin savage at Ben. "Aw con buy my own sauve," he said. "Here! tak thi rubbitch!"

"What's up neaw?" Ben axed, starin. Comin to look he fund his milk crudded, an' t' mixthur lookin as bilious as carriage varnish. He thried a careful lick but didn't seem to matther it mich, an' axed me to sample th' stuff.

"Nay!" aw said. "T' look's enough for me. Aw don't use furnithur polish to mi inside. Tha'd betther give it to th' guard for axle oil."

"Aw've some luck wi mi dhrink to-day, shuzheaw," Ben grumbl't. "Iv it weren't for th' bottle aw'd cob it away."

North again, levin Morecambe an' Grange to th' left hond, runnin on th' bay edge awhile, bi Bowton-le-Sands an' Carnforth to Oxenhowm Junction, where we turn't off th' main line, droppin deawn through bonny Kendal to Windhermere station.

"Abeaut time, too!" Degger grumbl't. "Four heaur an a' hauve wi runnin eighty mile! They wanten a bigger flywheel, or less pulleys, or sthraps tightenin, or summat. Wheere neaw? Aw see nought o' t' wayther yet."

Ben had bin afore an' knew his road abeaut. "We mun tak a bus deawn to Bowness," he towd us. "That's where they keepen th' lake, an' they'll find us summat t' eight beside."

So we geet on a 'bus, rode deawn to th' say level within a foot or two, an' fund Bowness smother't i' roses. They charged us sixpence apiece for th' fare, an' that geet Degger's back up some soon.

"Heaw fur is it?" he axed th' guard.

"A mile and a half, sir," th' chap said, very civil, wi a pleasant dhrawl 'at belongs to these Westmorland folk.

"It's rank robbery!" Degger swore. "Aw'll pay noane! Sixpence for a penny ride, an' th' market deawn a sixteenth again this mornin! Yo met think we were made o' brass."

"Sixpence, please. It is the ordinary fare."

"It's ornary enough," says Degger, walkin off. "We're noane as green as we're goose-lookin, think on. Aw'll pay no moore nor threehawpence shuz what happens, an' tha may fot th' policemen an' th' fire brigade iv tha's a mind. Aw were a bit fast heaw yo geet yor livin up here, for aw've ne'er sin a facthry chimbley for thirty mile, but aw con see neaw."

Ben an' me paid th' fare between us, as t'other mon couldn't afford it, an' we looked afther summat t'eight to lay a feaundation for th' day's wark, Degger gruntin like a dog wi a sore leg.

Sauve, salve. *Ornary*, bad, ill-favoured.

Dinner o'er, we started shappin to find th' lake. As we left th' table Ben poo'd his ointment bottle eaut an' offer't us some.

"Taste, lads," he said. "It'll sattle yor meight."

"Ger off wi thi slutch!" Degger co'd eaut. "That 'd sattle me, beside mi meight. Iv tha shows that thing again to-day aw'll dhreawn thee i' t' wayther—iv there is ony, that is. Aw'm gettin some deaubts abeaut 'em havin a lake at o."

But his deaubts were soon shifted, for less nor five minutes' walk through pratty windin sthreets, past heauses built o' dhry wallin an' hud i' rose an' honeysuckle, brought us on to th' lake bankin. Long an' narrow, t' clear wayther lee sparklin i' th' sun, sthretchin seauth between weel-timbered hillocks toard Morecambe Bay, an' north to th' feet ov a lot o' big meauntains, stonnin abeaut ony road, steep, rocky, painted green an' breawn. Dotted up an' deawn th' lake we seed little reaunt green islands, an' t'other bank rose hee an' sthraight, crommed wi dark-shinin firs, shuttin th' view in o' that side.

"So this is it!" aw brasted eaut. "This is th' shop we'n yerd so mich abeaut ever sin' we were lads! This is th' valley 'at's sent a whole rook o' poets off their yeads, an' set 'em to th' weary job o' dhrawin it wi papper an' ink! Ston back a bit whol aw read yo some blank verse."

"Howd on!" Ben says. "Noane o' thi marlocks, or aw'll cob thee in. It's nowt but wayther, an' dirt, an' timber, when o 's said. There's nowt to make a song abeaut."

Degger stood a minute or two wi his meauth oppen at th' first seet o' so mich beauty, but when his teeth coome together again his business habits set him studyin what 'd be th' best use to make o' th' spot.

"It wouldn't cost mich to run a dam across that narrow part," he mutther't to hissel. "There's just nice width for a ropewalk undher yon fur side, an' a thravellin crane ud be rare an' hondy on th' broo top. T' facthry ud ston just abeaut here. There's stone an' timber ready on th' greaund, an' no 'casion for ony expense i' back-lashes. It should be cool an' damp, too, undher o these hills; weighvin ud be no throuble mich here."

He poo'd th' owd pocketbook eaut an' gated doin sums again. "Say we started wi a mule-reawm eighty yard long, an' a theausan-loom shade. Co it two hundhred yard. Then we mut have a dye-works—this wayther met a bin gether't here o' purpose for dyein, but these bowstheryeads han ne'er fund it eaut, seeminly—an' hawve a dozen canel boats to bring cotton up th' brook an' tak cops an' cuts back. Say a quather ov a mile, wharf an o. There looks lond enough between here an' yon nook. Let's see."

Off he set, yardin th' lakeside eaut, takkin no notice o' nobry; dotted th' distance deawn in his book, an' coome back.

"He's a fizzer is yon mon," Ben says, chucklin. "We'd some wit axin *him* to come a pleasurin wi us. He should have a bed set up in a facthry office, an' sleep among cotton every neet."

"Aw deaubt iv he con sleep *for* it, bi th' road he shaps. Why, he'll have hawve-a-dozen facthries, tuthri machine shops, an' a co-op. store planned afore baggin-time, iv we'll nobbut let him a-be!"

"It's nought less nor a shame to lev o this greaund an' wayther lyin idle," Degger said, wi a disgusted look as he coome up to us. "It's a ready-made hole for cotton-spinnin, this is. There met happen be some bother to get good honds, as th' folk here han so little shift in 'em; but when we geet these gardens, fleawers, an' sichlike rubbitch shifted, they'd ha less reawm for idlin their time away an' met larn some useful wark."

"Well," aw said, "Iv tha's getten thi new consarn mapped eaut, tha'll ha time to come for a sail neaw. Tuthri moore o' thy breed an' Englan ud be o soot boxes, long chimbleys, an' cat runs."

We fund a styemer for Ambleside, an' sail't off eaut o' th' bay—for they co'n it a bay, though it's nobbut like a dinge i' th' lakeside. Th' captain set his boat nose fair at th' rook o' meauntains 'at looked to block o t' north up, an' at 'em we went, like a tarrier at a row ov elephants.

> "Cultured slopes,
> Wild tracks of forest ground, and scattered groves,
> And mountains bare, or clothed with ancient woods,
> Surrounded us; and as we held our way
> Along the level of the glassy flood,
> They ceased not to surround us; change of place,
> From kindred features diversely combined,
> Producing change of beauty ever new."

There were plenty o' cock-boats, electhric launches, barges cover't in wi sthriped cloth, an' so on, knockin abeaut, givin life to th' view. Otogether, what wi th' creawdin hills, endless woods, plant-crommed islands, an' dancin wayther, it looked to me aw'd ne'er sin sich a bonny spot i' o mi life.

"Tell us what yo co'n o these meauntains," Ben said to th' steersman, a quiet, civil chap. "There's one yon wi a back like a camel."

"Those are the Langdale Pikes. Over here to the left is Coniston Old Man; but you can't see our highest mountains for the mist. These are only hills, you know."

"Is that o?" Ben said. "Some on 'em 'll tak a bit o' climbin, too. Hills, are they? Well, thank yo, maisther. Have a taste; it'll make that pulley twirl reaund yezzier."

"What on earth have you got here?" th' wheelman axed, lookin hard at th' bottle, where lines o' breawn rum showed

between brokken lumps an' cruds o' seaur milk. "Something you want drinking?"

Ben nodded, so th' steerer sheauted deawn th' firehole an' a coaly, sweaty engineer popped his yead up.

"Are you thirsty, William?"

"Thirsty!" grunted th' engineer, lookin disgusted bi sich a foolish question, an' wringin a weet splash eaut ov his cap. "But for stopping business by stranding the blessed boat, I could drink the lake dry."

"Here you are, then," says the steersman givin him Ben's patent medicine. "Drink that."

"What sort of a brew's this?" t'other axed, just tastin an' lickin his lips. "Shoe polish? It's wet, anyhow." So he deawn wi it, vanishin into his hole again; an' that were th' last o' Simpson's wondherful lotion.

We'd to get eaut an' walk at Ambleside, as t' wayther gwoes no fur; an' welly afore we'd planted foot upo dhry lond we geet worried bi wagonette dhrivers wantin to take us to Grasmere. Degger were for havin noane.

"It's nobbut moore expense," he grumbl't, "an' now't to be sin nobbut moore broos, an' plantins, an' crazy heauses built o' stone fit for nowt but road metal. Aw'm stoppin' here whol th' boat gwoes back."

"Come on, Ben!" aw said, "Let's goo an' see Wordsworth's grave. It's woth eighteenpence to walk reaund a dyead poet."

"Wordsworth!" Ben axed, studyin. "Who's he? There's some Wadsworths up Halifax Road, iv they're ony relation. Nowe? Oh well! aw'll go wi thee. Aw'm noane skymous."

"Come on, Degger," aw said, "It's no use sittin here bi thysel, an' we may happen leet on a betther shop to plant thi new teawn in. Make a gradely survey afore tha starts buildin."

So he coome wi us, grumblin hard at th' expense. We climbed onto a wagonette, behinnd two gam little galloways 'at slashed away oather up hill or deawn at seven mile an heaur, a rare speed for a meauntain road, an' what wi th' swift thravellin an' sweet coolin wynt aw could feel mi spirits gooin up like a balloon. We were in a narrow windin valley between th' hills, every yard o' fruitful greaund showin beauties oather o' mon's wark or nathur's shapin. Threes hung o'er us an' stood abeaut wherever they could get foothowd on th' steep slopes, fleawers lent rare colours an' rich scents, brooks an' threads o' wayther ran abeaut an' cobbed theirsel deawn hee rocks, chatther, chatther, chattherin wur nor a sewin-class, an' olez afore us a shiftin blue line o' far-off hills invited curious thravellers to seech fur into th' unknown magic nooks where th' marks o' God's fingers are yet so plain to be sin.

We passed a big square stone heause, buried in a green grove to th' reet. "Rydal Mount," t' dhriver towd us; an' a bit fur on

Skymous, squeamish.

he showed us a big cowd-lookin boudher where he reckon't Wordsworth used to sit composin. Then we coome to Rydal wayther, a little still poand like a lookin-glass, showin picthers o' wood an' broo, wrong end up,

"A thousand fathoms down."

On again, reaund tuthri moore corners, deeper among th' lonely hills, to Grasmere lake an' village, a quiet, simple counthry nook, hollowed eaut o' purpose for dhremers to idle in, an' be thankful they're wick. Even Degger, noane mich i' t' dhremin line mostly, felt some touch o' satisfaction, an' happen for abeaut th' first time sin' he were born gated thinkin there met be summat betther i' life nor facthry wark an' butther scrapin. Aw yerd him give a bit ov a sigh, an' said, to draw him eaut, "Good oppenin for a fullin mill here, owd mon. Yon waytherfo ud be very hondy, an' t' lake ud look moore ornimental wi some chemical berm floatin abeaut it, astid ov o these lilies an' sich like weedy rubbitch. When we'd getten that an' a good long row o' breek back-to-back cottages, th' valley ud be fitted up."

Degger looked hard at me, an' then said, "Iv ever aw con addle brass enough to keep mysel aw'll sattle here an' have a rest. There's summat i' th' air feels soothin—same as a Sunday mornin when th' engine's stopped. It does for sure."

"Thee rest!" Ben co'd eaut. "There's no rest for sich diversome folk as thee eautside a wood singlet."

We looked reaund th' village, what bit there were to see, went into th' church, a plain owd-fashion't place enough, an' then walked through t' graveyard whol we coome to a shady corner, where a flag stood up carved wi a name aw'd known ever sin', as a hawve-timer, aw'd larn't th' bad habit o' lyin on mi bed-chamber floor to read books late at neet bi th' leet ov a hawpny candle.

"Na then, lads," aw said. "There's a chap undher here 'at yo'll happen like to yer summat abeaut. What done yo think brings folk here fro every nook o' th' world to read th' inscription on that square flag, an' dhrop these bunches o' fresh-plucked fleawers on this green sod?"

"Nay!" Degger says, lookin reaund him. "Aw con see nowt to come for. Aw con undherston folk gooin a mile or two eaut o' their road to look at new machinery or wom-fed pigs——"

"Shut up!" Ben said, stoppin him. "What dost want bringin thi shop-talk here, as iv we hadn't enough awom! Iv ever tha gwoes up to heaven it'll be in a cheese-box. Goo on, weighver; let's yer summat abeaut this chap."

"Well, first ov o, aw should think he ne'er did a day's hard wark in his life."

Wood singlet, coffin.

"Then he were up to nought," says Degger. "It's no use thee talkin! Aw reckon he were too far larn't to buckle to. What were his thrade?"

"He ne'er larn't one. Most ov his time went i' walkin up an' deawn here, thravellin o'er Europe, an' writin poethry."

"Well, aw'll be shot!" Degger said, turnin away as iv that sattl't him.

"Iv that's bein a poet aw could do wi prenticin to th' job mysel," Ben says. "Wi some thick twist an' a quart ov ale or two life wouldn't be so cumbersome up here. Aw'd oather jow tuthri songs eaut o' mi yead or thry hard."

"Tha'll happen stare, Degger, iv aw tell thee 'at for o he wortched noane, an' tha's done nowt else sin' tha were nine year owd, he were a dyel moore use i' th' world nor thee."

"That's noane sayin mich," Ben put in.

"Oh! isn't it?" Degger sneer't. "Aw've done summat yo cliver-dicks ne'er shapped, shuzheaw—aw've made brass. Aw con buy yo bwoth eaut!" He slapped his pocket, makin tuthri hawp-nies jingle, an' looked at us as iv there were nowt no moore to be said after that.

"Aw'm noane upo sale mysel," aw went on, "an iv tha bought Ben he'd turn eaut a quare bargain. One o' this dyead chap's greight merits were 'at he'd tell no lies, nor ston 'em quietly fro other folk."

"It's a good job he ne'er *did* goo into business, then," Degger said, quite solid. "He'd soon ha bin ruinated at that speed."

"He geet a notion into his yead middlin soon on 'at he were born for a poet, an' it's raythur laughable to see wi what care he saved up an' printed every scrap o' verse 'at coome into his thoughtful brains. Some ov his stuff's poor enough. Hearken to this:

'The cock is crowing,
The stream is flowing,
The small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter,
The green field sleeps in the sun;
The oldest and youngest
Are at work with the strongest;
The cattle are grazing,
Their heads never raising;
There are forty feeding like one!'"

"Th' poet ud ha bin at his wark, too, iv aw'd bin here," Degger said; "or else ha getten punced. Why, it's wur nor 'A little ship,' or 'Twinkle, twinkle.'"

"Aw'll back mysel to do as good as that wi a fortnit's thrainin, iv th' weather 'll keep owt like," Ben said.

"Well, iv that doesn't shuit yo conossers aw'll thry summat else. Hearken again a minute."

"Tha doesn't expect we s' be foos enough to ston here whol tha reads o that book through, doesta?" Degger axed. "Shove it i' thi pocket, mon, an' give o'er."

"Keep quiet, wi thee; aw shan't be aboon five minutes. Husht!

'I have seen
A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract
Of inland ground, applying to his ear
The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell;
To which, in silence hushed, his very soul
Listened intensely; and his countenance soon
Brightened with joy; for murmurings from within
Were heard—sonorous cadences! whereby,
To his belief, the monitor expressed
Mysterious union with its native sea.
Even such a shell the universe itself
Is to the ear of Faith; and there are times,
I doubt not, when to you it doth impart
Authentic tidings of invisible things;
Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power;
And central peace, subsisting at the heart
Of endless agitation. Here you stand,
Adore, and worship, when you know it not;
Pious beyond the intention of your thought;
Devout above the meaning of your will.'"

"Come, that's noane so dusty!" says Degger when aw stopped. "Aw've sin yon little lass ov eaurs doin that thrick wi th' big shell on th' front reawm chimbley-piece, an' hoo talks abeaut yerin th' say rowl inside. Who's towd him that, aw wondher?"

Ben had bin waggin his yead a bit, an' when Degger finished he said,

"That's what they co'n poethry, is it? Iv aw yerd that mak o' talk i' Rachda aw should co it babbywark, but some road it seaunds reet enough here, oather wi th' climate or summat. It's like rayther deep, too, as iv th' owd brid hardly knew hissel what he myent."

"Come! aw s' be forced to give yo a bit moore, as yo're bwoth dubious abeaut th' job. Yo'n bwoth sin th' moon rise mony a time."

"Ah! an' gwone a cwortin undher it," Degger said.

"What thee?" Ben axed him. "Aw should ne'er ha thought tha could make time for that."

"We don't tell o we known," grinned Degger, wi th' sly undherhond look common to folk 'at getten a livin bi dodgin. "Aw've had as mich time for plezurin as aw wanted, an' made brass beside."

"Aw'll tell thee what, Degger," aw said, gettin mad at his beaunce, "iv tha swaggers ony moore abeaut thi brass Ben an' me 'll upend thee an' tak it, levin thee nowt but a railway ticket an'

th' price ov a cowd pint. We'n as mich reet to it as thee, an' that's noane so desperate mich iv justice coome to be done."

"Well, aw did think aw were comin eaut wi honest folk, shuzheaw."

"Tha thought reet," Ben towd him. "Iv we done rob thee it'll be in a fair honest road, afther gradely notice. Noane o' thi lyin, chetin, sellin waythers for bacca, an' sichlike for us! Goo on, weighver, he's noane woth botherin wi."

So aw read up another bit o' blank:

> "Within the soul a faculty abides,
> That with interpositions, which would hide
> And darken, so can deal that they become
> Contingencies of pomp; and serve to exalt
> Her native brightness. As the ample moon,
> In the deep stillness of a summer even
> Rising behind a thick and lofty grove,
> Burns, like an unconsuming fire of light,
> In the green trees; and, kindling on all sides,
> Their leafy umbrage, turns the dusky veil
> Into a substance glorious as her own,
> Yea! with her own incorporated, by power
> Capacious and serene. Like power abides
> In man's celestial spirit; virtue thus
> Sets forth and magnifies herself; thus feeds
> A calm, a beautiful, a silent fire,
> From the encumbrances of mortal life,
> From error, disappointment—nay, from guilt;
> And sometimes, so relenting justice wills,
> From palpable oppressions of despair."

"That's o moonshine!" Degger co'd eaut. "There's tuthri good words in it, too."

"What's *tha* getten to say again it?" aw axed Ben.

"Nay!" he says, "it's yezzier nor t' other, but a bit deep yet for a chap to undherston 'at started in a scutchin hole. Aw cawn't foot up to that mak. It's takken summat moore nor Limerick rowl an' Wardle seauk to put that together."

"Iv tha could yer us, William," aw said, turnin toard th' gravestone, "tha met weel be preaud o' sich a compliment as that, fro a gradely Rachda chap, betther acquainted wi cotton nor cantos an' soot nor sonnets. Good day, owd friend; long an' quiet rest to thee, an' let's hope thy example may do summat toard stoppin th' mad greedy scutther for brass an' wicked grindin deawn ov helpless folk we sin sadly to mich on."

"Same here," Ben chim't in. "Aw wish thee good luck, flat o' thi back undher t' clod. It's noane every day tha gets three sich quare customers to talk wi thee."

Degger said nowt, havin no manners abeaut him, but turn't his back; so we o walked off deawn to th' lake, lyin reaunt as a ring undher green slantin hills. Iv we'd nobbut had a bit moore time we could soon ha bin at Thirlmere, an' getten a look at

Helvellyn; but it were no go iv we myent catchin a thrain wom, so we sattl't to just have a peep reaund an' be shappin back.

On th' lake edge, sittin wi his bare feet i' t' wayther an' a greight pair o' thick-soled shoon beside him, we fund a shabby-donned chap. He were gettin owdish, bi th' look ov his long white yure an' whiskers, but that didn't bother him mich, judgin bi his cheerful whistle. Th' sun had tanned him a rich breawn, like good rowler leather, an' he looked as tough an' limber as a willow switch. So he sit whistlin an' bathin his feet, an' we stood starin at him awhile, thinkin he seemed as free fro care as ony chap we'd let on in eaur thravels that day.

"Yon's a nice owd chap," aw said. "He nobbut wants a brode brim to his cap, tuthri cockle-shells, an' a hook on his iron-shod walkin-stick to make a tidy pilgrim. Happen he is one; let's get a bit nar."

Th' owd lad see'd us comin, stopped his whistlin, an' co'd eaut, "The pride of the day to you, gentlemen."

Same to him we o said, an' sittin us deawn on th' bonk we'd a bit ov a talk.

BEN.—Yo'n bin walkin, owd brid. It's made yor toes a bit sore, has it?

PILGRIM.—I was up Skiddaw at sunrise with a Lancashire party, and have been wandering over fell and holm ever since.

WEIGHVER.—An' neaw yo'n let across another Lancashire gang at Grasmere. Are yo fond o' walkin?

PILGRIM.—I make a living by it, that's all. How stifling the air is down here after being on the mountains!

BEN.—It may feel so to yo, maisther; but aw ne'er tasted sich grand stuff afore.

DEGGER.—Tha'rt smother't i' yure, owd chap; that's o 'at ails thee. Get pow'd an tha'll fot thi wynt yezzier.

PILGRIM.—Pow'd? What is that?

WEIGHVER.—He nobbut myens yo wanten some yure clippin. Where's thi manners, Degger?

PILGRIM.—Yure? What do you mean by yure?

DEGGER.—Well, for an owd un aw ne'er coome across one 'at knew less.

PILGRIM.—As you please, sir. Can I take you gentlemen up Scafell to-morrow?

BEN.—Hardly, beaut yo'll tak us reaund bi Rachda. We're for wom bi t' next thrain.

PILGRIM.—I advise you to stop while you are here. This is admitted to be the finest part of the world, to say nothing of Grasmere sports coming on shortly. Wait till then, and see me figure in the guides' race.

WEIGHVER.—Oh! that's yor job, is it? But yo'll want a bit ov a start off th' young uns. Nowe! we mun get back to-neet.

PILGRIM.—Let me lose you on the hills. You will have a good excuse then, and I undertake to find you again in time for the fun.

DEGGER (*grinnin*).—That'll do! Tha knows moore nor aw thought.

WEIGHVER.—Ah! that just shuits thy dodgy mind, lad. It's abeaut ov a piece wi that bacon job.

DEGGER (*crammed*).—Howd thi din wi thi bacon!

BEN.—Hello! What were that abeaut?

WEIGHVER.—What! Hast ne'er yerd o' that bit o' thradin? Degger were i' Manchesther soon one mornin, tha knows, an' yerd ov a rise i' bacon. Next minute he met a wholsale dyeler fro Rachda on Victoria Bridge, an' thought to hissel "Dan's nobbut just comin into th' market, he wain't know o' this rise. He'll ha left his lad i' th' shop—aw'll slip back an' buy 'em up afore th' owd chap con tallygraph." So he just had a word or two wi Dan, keepin him whol close on thrain time, an' then bowted off to Rachda an' bought mony a hundherdweight o' pig flesh at his own price.

DEGGER (*grinnin*).—Sarve 'em reet? They'd th' same chance as me, hadn't they?

PILGRIM.—The wild creatures of the mountain treat one another more fairly than that. I am sorry you have such a treacherous heart.

(*Puts his stockins an' shoon on.*)

DEGGER (*sulky*).—There's nowt undherhond abeaut it. Aw've had to wortch hard for what aw've getten, let me tell thee. Folk i' business mun do same as other folk.

PILGRIM (*gettin up*).—You are doing well to leave our country so soon. This is no place for small hearts and sordid minds. I will go back into the hills, where no such rogues as you poison the wind.

DEGGER.—Aw tell thee onybody i' th' same thrade ud just ha done as aw did. Were aw beaun to teighch 'em their business? Not likely!

BEN.—Tha'rt a poor hond at logic, Degger. Upo that tack ony thief met co hissel honest becose folk wouldn't tak care enough o' their property.

DEGGER.—Yo're gooin it wi some ov a rattle, by gum! Just becose aw've made a bit yo're as jealous as a ceaw wi two cawves. It's nobbut t' reglar system o' doin business, that isn't—wi co-ops. an' o.

WEIGHVER.—Business may weel be bad, then! Ne'er mind, Degger, lad! Tha's plenty o' brass o' thi own an' other folks', so tha'rt content.

DEGGER.—Nay! indeed aw noather. Aw'll lev twenty theausand peaund behinnd me when aw dee. So neaw! what han yo to say to that, yo chaps addlin a peaund a week?

BEN.—Tha'd better tak it wi thee, aw sh' think.

PILGRIM.—There, you see! What a strange fancy this is of money saving! Twenty thousand pounds! I couldn't spend that in a hundred years.

DEGGER (*sarcastic*).—Aw darsay! (*Braggin.*) But aw con buy yo everyone up, for o yor talk. Everyone!

WEIGHVER.—Ger off into thi meauntains, owd brid, afore we ruinate thi morals, an' we'll be takkin this mon wom. Good neet.

PILGRIM.—Good night, sir; good night to all. Speaking of money, if you choose to give me a trifle I will accept it. (*To Degger.*) Not from you, however. I should scorn to handle your money.

DEGGER.—That's a good job, becose tha'rt noane likely to have mich chance.

PILGRIM.—Scorn it, sir, I repeat! But if these gentlemen—these *gentlemen*, you understand—wish to offer me a small memorial, I will not decline it.

WEIGHVER (*whisperin*).—Heaw mich apiece, Ben? We con hardly offer less nor sixpence to a chap wi o that yure on him.

BEN.—O reet!

(*Pilgrim gets a shillin an' marches off wi a long swingin sthride.*)

WEIGHVER.—Well, aw would ha gien th' owd chap a copper or two, iv aw'd bin thee, Degger.

BEN.—He's too greedy to live very near. Yon's a good owd chap, aw'll bet, judgin fro his looks.

DEGGER.—Dost think so?

WEIGHVER.—Aw think so, shuzheaw. His leet heart an' breet face con nobbut ha worn so weel bi havin a clear conscience behinnd 'em. A face soon shows what a mon is an' does; that's heaw it happens 'at thy nose an' chin are gettin so sharp at th' end.

DEGGER.—O reet, parson! Aw'd as soon have a sharp nose as a reaunt un iv there's brass at th' end on't. Aw con buy yo o up, fawse as yo reckon to be.

WEIGHVER.—There's no curin thee, Degger, so tha mun go back as tha coome. Here's eaur shanthrydan comin. Neaw dhriver! Who's yon tall white-yeaded owd chap gooin up th' lone?

DHRIVER.—Nobody knows. Have you given him anything?

BEN (*softly*).—Hello! (*Leaud*) Nobbut a shillin.

DHRIVER.—He, he! You'll find him at the "Salutation" to-night, then.

BEN.—Nay! Come! He's no aleheause chap, yon. He's off up th' meauntains.

DHRIVER.—Mountains! He hasn't climbed a hill this dozen years.

DEGGER.—What abeaut him bein a guide an' runnin i' Grasmere sports, then?

DHRIVER.—What him! Ho, ho! Well you *are* a simple lot.

WEIGHVER.—Neaw look here, young chap! This is a sayrious job. Arta beaun to make eaut 'at yon honsome, venerable chap tells lies?

DHRIVER.—That's how he makes his living. He was asleep in a barn here at eight o'clock this morning, dead drunk.

That sattl't me an' Ben. We crept, crushed flat, into th' carriage, Degger brastin wi laughin an' crowin o'er us to some tune; an' we gav up thryin to mend him sthraight off.

Back we went through o th' glorious seets deawn to th' lake, an' o'er that to Bowness again, an' so wom afore midneet. We'll ha nowt no moore to do wi mendin Degger. He's like wur nor ever sin' we took him i' hond, an 'that shows heaw dangerous it is to start preighchin beaut experience.

CLOG TOPS.

JACOB Hardstone, a Whitoth lonlord, stood at his heause dur lookin abeaut him an' gapin hard, as lonlords will do in their spare time. He looked up Market sthreet, an' he looked deawn it, beaut makin ony impression on that owd-established hee-road; he stared afore him at th' opposite row ov heauses, shuttin off his view o' th' railway station an' snow-peckl't heights o' Rooleys; he walked to his heause-end to peep up th' hill toard Lobden; then, as nowt happen't an' nobry stirred, he gaped again an' went inside to th' tapreawm fire.

"Sleepy wark, this," says Jacob, swingin his arms behinnd his yead. "We met as weel shut up—nobry's likely to want frozzen ale. Iv aw'd had ony wit aw should ha gwone into th' grocerin business, for folk *mun* eight whatever happens. Nowt but snow and ice to be sin, and cowd enough to starve yon craven images on th' church speaut! Iv there's ony brass to be made this weather it'll be among th' skate-farmers. This fire's gettin deawn, too; we mun keep *that* up, aw reckon. Neaw, Phyllis!"

"What neaw?" his wife sheauted fro th' kitchen.

"This fire wants mendin. Bring a shoolful o' naplins an' a cob or two."

Th' missis coome wi a bucket o' coal, catchin Jacob just i' th' middle ov a long gape, as he stood wi his back to th' fire.

"Heaw leets tha couldn't fot 'em thisel, idleback?" hoo says, shovin him o' one side wi a good-humour't smile. "Tha's nowt agate. It's a bonny thing 'at aw mun lev mi weshin to wait on a mon like thee. Here aw've bin up sin' hawve-past six, scrattin like a bantam, wi thee snorin i' bed whol ten very near; an' neaw tha'rt getten up tha'll do nowt. Arta for killin me wi wark, or heaw?"

"Tha wants some sleck to make a gradely job o' that," Jacob said, thinkin moore abeaut th' fire-mendin nor his wife's talk. "Bonk it up weel at th' back, an' it'll last a bit."

"Tha taks some waitin on," Phyllis grumbl't; but hoo fot th' sleck as hoo were towd, cobbed it on th' fireback, an' rear't a poker again th' top-bar to charm a dhraught.

Just then a little stiff chap coome in, carryin a parcel on his shooldher, sit him deawn, and axed for some ale. Jacob fot it an' said,

"Dost find it cowd eautside, Clogger?"

"Rayther, for sure."

"Where hast bin to-day?"

"Deawn th' road a piece."

"Heaw fur?"

"As far as Rachda," Clogger said, a bit nettl't. "Is there owt else tha wants to know?"

"Nay, nay! It's noane at aw'm inquisitive. Is there mich stirrin Rachda road on?"

"Like middlin."

"Is there owt fresh theere, particlar?"

"Aw've yerd o' nowt."

"Tha'll ha bin upo business o' some mak, aw guess?"

"Aw've bin for some clog-tops, an aw've getten 'em here lapped up i' this parcel, sithee. When tha's finished thi sperrin aw'll lev thee to tak care on 'em a bit, whol aw slip up into th' Square."

"Clog tops, are they?" says Jacob. "Well! An' what price are they fottin just neaw, like?"

"Ne'er thee mind!" Clogger towd him. "Stick to thi own thrade. What makes this chap o' yors so curious, missis? Done yo ne'er tell him nought, 'at he's to bother other folk so mich?"

"It's no use me sayin nought, Jim," Phyllis laughed. "He's larn't up, for owt aw con teighch him."

Clogger went eaut when his pot were empty, an' afore his back were fairly turn't Jacob were fingerin th' parcel—weighin it in his honds, peepin in at th' ends, an' so on."

"Aw wondher iv he buys his tops rough or polished, neaw. Aw've a good mind to oppen 'em eaut, an' see. What saysta, Phyllis?"

"Aw say mind thi own business, an' keep thi itchin fingers off other folks' property;" an' away went Phyllis back to her weshin.

"Jacob potther't abeaut th' parcel, studyin whether to cut it oppen or not, when he catched seet ov a bit o' white papper just showin at one end. Eaut it coome in a twinkle. It were a white selvedge off a newspapper sheet, wi this written on i' blacklead:

"Weight, 24lb. 8oz."

"Good do!" th' lonlort chuckl't, tuckin th' slip weel inside again. "Aw'll have some gam eaut o' this yet."

"What hast getten theere, Jacob?" a voice axed behinnd him, for he'd bin too busy stickin his nose into th' parcel to yer a young chap come in.

"Eh!" he co'd eaut, jumpin. "Is it thee, Threpper? Aw guess yo're stopped i' th' stone-delph?"

"Dost think onybody but a foo ud stop theere this weather! What hast getten theere, aw say? Cheese?"

"Nay, it's some tops Jim Clogger left whol he co's up th' hill. Aw were just wondherin what they weighed. Heaw mich would ta guess?"

"Abeaut five hunduth-weight, by an' so," Threpper said, fillin his pipe. "Warm me some ale, an' squeeze a saup o' rum into it."

So Hardstone geet deawn his tin neetcap to cook th' ale in, an' Threpper sang a little ditty to hissel whol he waited.

SONG.

Last neet aw watched a thremblin star,
Breet as my Hannah's e'en,
An' thought, "For o tha's com'n so far,
Beaut stairs or steps between,
As far mi love for her con sthrike,
As plain to th' world con show;
So wot it swuthers up it's like
As folk are bund to know."

A smooky cleaud crawl't o'er an' hud
That pratty star fro seet;
"Ah, but," aw said, "it's undherstood
Tha's lost no spark o' leet;
Bwoth stars an' lovin hearts shine on
Whatever screens divide,
When th' smooky reech is past an' gwone
O's reet at t'other side."

Afore the song were finished another customer turn't up—Solomon Griskin, a butcher 'at lived tuthri durs nar Endin. He sit him deawn, gav th' singer a clap, an' axed Jacob to fot him some whisky.

"Poo up to th' fire, owd brid," Threpper said. "It's nobbut cowdish. Yo're gettin to look betther for keepin, Solomon—yo'll be as far reaund as a waytherworks in a bit."

"Aw'm different to thee, then," th' butcher said. "It'd tak tuthri thi thickness to fill a fire-escape. Heaw is it book-keepin taks o t' nathur eaut o' folk?"

"It's wi smellin raw stone so mich, aw think," Threpper said, laughin. "Aw'm most o' mi time up i' th' delph neaw, bookin weigh tickets an' sich like. Tha'd run to seed a bit thisel, butcher, iv tha stood upo yon hill tuthri days."

"Nay! aw'll stop deawn i' th' bottom," Solomon says. "It's hard wark broo-climbin just neaw."

"It's yezzy enough slurrin deawn again, so there is a bit ov a poo theere. There's a slippy-ice deawn th' Ho-fowt tuthri mile long."

"Tuthri *what?*" Jacob sheauted, very near upsettin th' ale-warmer.

"Well, it's two hundherd yard iv it's an inch, an' nobbut a foot wide. Aw wouldn't trust mysel on it for a thrifle, an' heaw t' lads getten deawn beaut breighkin their necks aw cawn't tell. There's mony a theausan young imps slurrin away, whistlin—honds i' their pockets—forty mile to th' heaur; an' yo should see what a patent

knock-kneed twitch they putten on to skim reaund a corner. Summat this road." He took a turn across th' floor to show 'em heaw t' thrick were done.

"Mony a theausan is there?" Solomon grunted.

"By an' so," says Threpper, laughin again.

"Aw've just had Jim Clogger in," Jacob said, when he'd fitted his customers wi their dhrink. "He's left yon parcel ——"

Threpper broke him off. "Aw say, Jacob! Hast yerd abeaut Sam, th' owd grocer, gettin dhropped on t'other neet?"

"Nowe! As aw were sayin abeaut Jim ——"

"What dhropped on him?" th' butcher axed.

"Why," Threpper chuckl't, "he were gooin wom fro his club late one neet, happen a bit lively in his yead iv owt, practisin a song as he walked. Th' owd brid thinks hissel a rare singer, yo known, an' likes a yeawl whenever he's a chance. So he were blazin away as hard as he could,

'The hanchor's weigh-h-h-h-ed,'

Howdin a top note eaut as long as his wynt lasted, when a dur oppen't, an' a woman ran eaut wi a ladin-can, sheautin,

'Here, felly! Aw'll have two quart.'"

"Oh, aw see!" Solomon says, grinnin. "Hoo took him for a cockle hawker like."

"As aw were tellin yo abeaut th' clogger ——" Jacob started again, but Threpper went on talkin, ne'er takkin no notice.

"So yo mun mind what yo say'n to Sammy, neaw, butcher. Ne'er mention nowt abeaut weighin, or yo'll have a din wi him."

"Talkin abeaut weighin," Jacob put in, catchin at his chance, "what done yo think this weighs?" He slapped th' clog tops on th' table undher their noses. "There's one on yo used to weighin stone, an' t'other beef; let's see iv yo'n ony judgment i' leather."

Solomon looked at th' parcel wi a solid face, an' said, "Aw could guess somewheere near, aw think."

"Come, let's have a bet on!" Jacob said. "Just for sport, that's o. What say'n yo?"

"There's some dodge i' 'rithmetic o' gettin at these mak o' things," Threpper said. "Some plan o' runnin a length o' clewkin reaund th' object, then takkin a diamether or two, multiplyin bi th' number o' degrees fro Grinidge, an' fottin o deawn to peaunds an' eaunces. Fot a yard o' bant, Jacob; aw con come within a ton that road."

"Ne'er mind bant," Jacob said, freeten't every minute th' clogger met be comin back to spoil his gam. "Arta bettin?"

"Nowt less nor five theausan peaund."

"Well, Solomon, aw'll bet yo."

"Nay, bettin's nowt i' my road."

"Be hanged to 'em!" Jacob thought. "Aw'd ne'er a betther chance nor this o' takkin a rise eaut o' folk, but it's no use to me neaw aw've getten it."

"It's middlin heavy for th' size on't," he said, heighvin th parcel up. "Just feel at it, butcher."

"There's a dyel o' bother wi thee an' thi bundle," Solomon grumbl't, sweighin th' clog-tops up an' deawn. "It's heavyish, for sure."

"Bet him, butcher, an' get done wi 't," Threpper said. "There'll be no pleasur i' livin wi him whol th' job's sattl't."

"Goo on, then," Solomon says. "What mun we bet? Two glasses?"

"Make it a pint o' whisky, just to put a little bit ov intherist into th' business," says artful Jacob. "That'll breighk noather on us."

"Agreed on," Solomon said. "Thee declare first."

"Nowe, we'll shap it betther nor that," Jacob towd him. "We mun get a bit o' papper apiece, write th' weight deawn beaut showin one another, an' him 'at comes nearest wins."

Th' butcher agreed to that, so they set abeaut fillin their pappers up. Jacob thought to hissel, "Neaw, iv aw put just th' exact weight deawn they'll find me eaut, an' that'll do noane." So he made his papper eaut two eaunce less nor th' parcel ticket, thinkin hissel middlin clivver. What Solomon thought there's no tellin, but he soon had his papper written, oather wi thinkin or beaut.

"Howd on, neaw, whol aw get th' bundle weighed," Threpper said. "Will yo come an' see fair play, or yo con thrust to mi word for th' weight?"

"Aw'll tak thi word, lad," said th' butcher wi a sly twinkle in his e'en; Jacob, wi a self-satisfied chuckle, said he durst chance it too; so Threpper bowted off wi th' parcel to seech a pair o' weigh-scales, gettin back again i' tuthri minutes.

"Show yor pappers neaw," he co'd eaut. "Aw'll soon umpire this job for yo."

So they gav him their tickets, an' he read eaut,

"Jacob, twenty-four peaund six eaunce; Solomon, twenty-four peaund seven eaunce. Th' parcel weighs just twenty-four peaund an' a hawve bi th' Store scales, so th' butcher wins bi a full eaunce. Yo're two rare good guessers!"

Hardstone could ha punced hissel. His face had bin a study whol Threpper were readin, showin every change o' look fro a satisfied grin to a twist like a new-slapped chilt's. "Too clivver again!" he thought. "Who could ever ha dhrem't he'd ha getten so near! It mun be becose he's used to heighvin weights, aw expect. What a foo aw were to lev so mich margin—hawve an eaunce ud ha done it."

He fot th' whisky, lookin very dismal. Solomon put th' bottle quietly into his pocket an' shapped for gooin. Tears coome into Jacob's e'en to think what sport he should have had iv it hadn't missed comin off, an' just then his wife coome to th' dur, co'in eaut,

"Here, Jacob! Aw want thee to mangle tuthri minutes."

"Mangle!" Jacob grunted. "Aw'm mangl't enough for once, aw think." An' he thought again to hissel, "Eh! what a foo aw were not to put seven eaunce an' a hawve deawn, when aw knew!"

"Well, aw'll be gooin," Solomon said, "Tha made a very tidy guess, Jacob. Tha'rt noane a bad judge o' weights."

"Guess!" th' lonlord sheauted, too mad to howd hissel ony longer, dhriven eaut ov o patience to think what gam he'd missed, an' like itchin to let em' o know he met ha won iv he'd wanted. "Guess be hanged! Bi th' mon, aw've a good mind to tell yo o abeaut it! Aw will, too!"

He ripped th' parcel oppen, pood eaut th' weight ticket 'at were responsible for o t' bother, an' showed it to 'em. "See yo! Aw knew abeaut this afore we started, an' thought aw had yo reet, butcher, just for once!"

"Oh! that's it?" Solomon said, stoppin at th' dur on his road eaut." "Aw thought tha'd some prank afloat, made thee so anxious to bet. There's nought so funny as funny folk, Jacob; but aw con tell thee summat moore abeaut thoose clog-tops yet."

"There's no need," Hardstone greawl't. "Aw know enough."

Solomon went on; "Jim Clogger forgeet to get his parcel weighed i' Rachda, so as he coome up he just co'd in at my shop to pop it on th' scales."

"He did?" Jacob sheauted, his e'en startin eaut ov his yead.

"He did," th' butcher said, quiet an' solid. "So then, Jacob, just to make sure there'd be no mistake, tha sees——"

"Well, what then?"

"Aw wrote him that weight ticket eaut mysel."

"Wrote it yorsel!" Jacob slutther't, lookin like fo'in in a fit, his wife and Threpper brastin their sides wi laughin at him. "Yo did? Then aw'll tell yo what it is Griskin—a chap 'at'll do that wouldn't stick at steighlin, aw don't care who he is!"

Solomon walked quietly off, noather speighkin nor smilin, an' next minute th' clogger bustl't in, co'in eaut,

"Neaw, Jacob, aw'll tak that parcel wom. Who's bin rivin it oppen this road?"

"Tak it, an' be hanged to 't," snarl't Jacob. "What dost want rootin here wi thi clog-tops?"

"Yer yo!" Jim said to Mrs. Hardstone. "That chap o' yors 'll ax questions when he's deein, an' iv ever they ta'en him to heaven he'll be sperrin o th' road."

Sperrin, asking questions.

"Aw know nought abeaut that," Phyllis says, laughin at her husban, "but iv he isn't at th' back o' yon mangle i' two minutes it'll be wur for him!"

So Phyllis went off back to her weshin, an' Jim teed his tops up an' bowted.

"Eh! what rogues there is i' this world!" Jacob said, stonnin i' th' middle o' t' floor like somebry gloppen't. "Aw met just as weel ne'er ha known what it weighed!"

"It looks to me, tha knows," Threpper said, "'at Solomon an' th' clogger made this up between 'em."

"Dost think so?"

"It looks so to me," says Threpper, waggin his yead like a chap 'at knew a thing or so.

"Well, but aw started th' gam mysel, tha sees. An' heaw could *they* tell aw should look at th' ticket?"

"Nay! they should know tha'rt a chap 'at ne'er spers."

"They should do," says Jacob. "Eh! what rogues there is! An' iv aw'd nobbut put deawn seven eaunce an' a hawve aw should ha won!"

So he made toard his mangle, an' Threpper went eaut singin to hissel,

"Oh! stars an' lovin hearts shine on,
Whatever screens divide;
When th' smoky reech is past an' gwone
O 's reet at t'other side."

A WINTHER JAUNT.

I.

SOON afther this year ov eighteen hundherd an' ninety-two coome into force aw let on a young bass singin friend o' mine, 'at said to me.

"Several of us are going to Knot End about the middle of February for a short holiday. Will you come?"

"Knot End?" aw said, studyin. "Where's that?"

"In the Fylde—just across the river from Fleetwood."

"It'll be rayther cowdish, wain't it?"

"Nothing to hurt anybody. I have been there often in the same month, and found good weather generally. There is shooting, boating, and walking in the neighbourhood; so you will keep yourself warm easily enough."

"Well, aw should like to goo, iv it's nobbut for knowin thi fayther so weel, but we'll see a bit nar th' time," aw towd him, an' thought little moore abeaut th' job whol a note coome tellin me to be ready for off on t' sixteenth o' February, at hawve past six i' th' mornin.

Aw sattl't to goo, an' turn't eaut when th' time coome to walk to th' station. A full moon were shinin breet as day, showin hill an' fielt fast bund wi frost an' dusted o'er wi a thin scattherin o' snow, like sugar on a curran cake, lookin o together moore like midneet nor facthry time. Hurryin folk filled every sthreet when aw started off, but as six o' t' clock turn't they vanished like magic, levin a greight stillness behinnd 'em. Aw stood a minute i' th' owd church yard, lookin at th' quiet teawn slantin up to th' curve o' white-jacketed hills, everything i' seet showin hard an' clear undher t' steelish-blue moon, an' thought to mysel there were little need to lev wom a-seechin pratty bits o' counthry, for owd Rachda, ill as we co'n it, takken at th' reet time an' place, con howd it own wi mony a spot 'at gets a dyel moore credit.

Aw fund mi mates on th' station platform, up to th' necks i' fiddle boxes an' luggage. There were six young fellahs, o on 'em players an' singers, lookin i' rare fettle, an' runnin o'er wi cheerfulness. Aw knew most on 'em ov owd, an' soon geet thick wi 'em o—Bass, Tenor, Fiddler, Vamper, Comic, an' Rosin.

"It looks to me 'at yo're gooin a buskin," aw said, as we squoze into a carriage, fillin th' hat shelves wi big an' little fiddles. "Where's yor guns an' gam-bags?" We were beaun a shootin for owt aw knew."

"You will find plenty of sport," says Bass, "rabbit hunting, rat catching, diver shooting—any amount of fun, and a country beautiful enough to satisfy any lover of nature."

"That's reet," aw said. "Aw could ne'er undherston what sport there were i' murdherin poor things, just becose they're less nor us, but yo'll happen teighch me neaw. Done yo charm th' rabbits eaut o' their holes wi th' fiddles, or what?"

Comic twinkl't at me eaut ov his merry black een, chirped tuthri tag-ends o' music-hall songs, an' then towd me they were o givin a concert that neet to build a Wesleyan chapel wi, an' iv aw behaved mysel aw could get in for nowt, to yer him act humorist, Fiddler shine on th' first fiddle, Rosin wrostle his 'cello, Tenor an' Bass sing like layrocks, an' see Vamper wortchin hard o neet to help 'em eaut.

Brastin wi joy at th' prospect o' sich a thrate as that, aw sattl't deawn whol we geet to Bury an' picked up a Philosopher—th' last mon o' th' crew. So neaw, o complete, we sail't away for Bowton station, that dismal dividin gate at' mun be passed to chet fro smooke an' darkness into th' breet north counthry; an' away again toard Preston. Th' sun were getherin peawer bi that time, sendin wide shoots o' leet o'er Rivington Pike an' across miles o' level lond to th' west, an' settin th' glee singers off wi "Hail, smilin morn." A grand mornin, signs o' comin spring showin i' th' meadows, sweet choruses o' brid-music ringin fro every hedge.

Six lively tongues chatther't away i' th' carriage, shortenin th' journey to some pitch. Philosopher an' me said little, becose he's thoughtsome an' aw'm gettin owd, but Comic moore nor made up for two quiet uns. He'd a grand diamond ring 'at 'd cost him as mich as fivepence once, an' a pipe wi a yead like a hollow butcher's block; so between these, tuthri score o' comic songs an bits ov actin, he kept us wick enough. There was no gettin him to keep still in his corner, so we were just thinkin ov axin Tenor, th' heaviest chap among us, to sit on him a while, when whuzz! we shot into Fleetwood station, an' jumped onto th' platform, makin a pile o' fiddles as iv Halle's band had com'n.

We made for th' Wyre edge, where Bass pointed to a hondful ov heauses across th' river, tellin us that were Knot End, th' shop we wanted to get at. We slutther't into a ferry boat, up sail, an' crossed th' brode river, soon londin on th' Knot an' makin up a flagged footroad toard th' village. Afore us miles o' level farmin lond sthretched green, to th' lift bare snow-peckl't sonds ran eaut into Morecambe Bay, to th' reet Wyre Dock were thick wi mast an' funnel, creawded near th' greight grain elevathor; fur up th' river a cleaud o' white reech blew fro some sautworks, an' wide o' that a wyntmill were turnin summersets on Preesall broo—th' only hillock at th' Fylde has to swagger wi.

A wind blew fro th' say 'at made us fair dither, makin us o feel sharp-set for some breakfast, so we left a retired pirate, donned in a fustian shirt wi long-sleeved shoon an' a billycock wi a kneb at th' back, to bring th' luggage afther us, an' bowted for th' lodgins.

Philosopher an' me walked up together, bein bwoth serious chaps, th' musicians runnin on at th' front.

"This is a wonderful place," he said, as we shiver't up th' road wi a dyel o' nose-wipin. "Whatever part of the year you may choose for coming here, the district is full of beauty. In summer fields and hedges are thick with flowers, in autumn you have the harvesting, in spring all the charms of budding vegetation, in winter——"

"That's enough," aw said. "There's no need to tell me what it's like i' winther—aw con bwoth feel an' see it. A kest-iron boiler met be fain to ston' here i' this wynt."

He laughed, sayin aw should get brokken in to th' climate afore long, an' aw thought he met be reet iv aw didn't get brokken deawn first. Tuthri fishermen an' boat-chaps were hangin abeaut waitin for some wark to seech 'em, an' two farmers were busy fillin a cart wi big stones off th' sonds.

"That seems to be hard rock," Philosopher said as we passed.

"Nane ower-heeat, nither," one o' th' chaps says, battin his arms wi a grin.

"That's Yokshire," aw thought to mysel. "What next?"

Breakfast were next, as it happen't, an' a rare good meal we made, wi some jokin o'er it. They gav us no seal-oil, whale-fat, nor reindeer meight, as met ha bin expected i' sich arctic regions; fresh eggs, new-catched fluke, brids, beef, an' mutton satisfied 'em, an' we felt satisfied too afther hawve an heaur's steady peckin.

"Now, boys," says Bass when we'd done, "how many for diver shooting?"

Fiddler an' Comic volunteered in a crack—they'd bin at th' job afore.

"What mak o' sport is it?" Rosin axed, dhrawin a bow across his big fiddle, for his fingers were olez itchin to feel t' ratchin sthrengs. "Done we goo on 't waythers to catch 'em."

"Out in a boat," Comic towd him, as he danced a fling on th' harstone. "The pirate supplies boat and guns, shoots us out well into the bay, and we shoot the divers as they come up. Does any gentleman want to buy a diamond ring?"

"O reet," says Rosin. "Just let me finish this symphony an' aw'm ready. Will yo goo, Weighver?"

"Nay, lad! Aw've no grudge again th' brids. Beside it's cowd enough upo dhry lond for me."

Dither, shiver.

"Hear, hear," Philosopher said. "Let these reckless youths risk their lives; you and I will walk gently round the village and meditate. An acre of land's worth a mile of water."

"I'll try the boat," Vamper said, puttin his fancy Scotch cap on: "a pianist more or less doesn't matter much. What do you say, Tenor? The sea-air will clear your voice."

"Oh! aw'll make one," Tenor says, smilin o reaund his good-humour't face. "Aw'm insured, iv owt happens."

"We had better not get drowned before the concert," Fiddler put in. "But the pirate is careful and an accomplished mariner, so we may hope for the best."

"Iv yo getten upset lay howd ov his boots," aw said. "They'll sink noane, yon wain't, whether he does or not. T' puzzle is heaw he ever gets into 'em."

So away they o went, Comic givin words o' command an' marchin 'em off like a dhrill-sergeant, takkin his big pipe chance they wanted a life-buoy; an' Philosopher took me eaut for a walk.

A glorious mornin, hard, breet, an' cuttin as a swordblade. We walked deawn to th' Knot, seed eaur merry gang o' mates settin sail i' th' pirate's boat, an' then turn't up th' Wyre side toard Shard Bridge. It' a bonny walk up that river edge, an' i' summer time it mun be summat to see an' remember. We wandhered up a good piece, past some fishermen's cottages, stonnin close to t' wayther, turnin off afther a while into a narrow lone filled wi owd ship timbers.

"Look you now," Philosopher said, stoppin to think a bit. "Here is a specimen of man's handiwork! These worn and rotting deck beams have done hard service in their day, if appearances go for anything. They have carried many a valuable load and precious life, swum through many a storm, simple and worthless as they look now. If they could speak we might listen a day or two before all the story was told."

"That's right, masther," a voice said at his elbow. A tall farmer-lookin chap had com'n across th' fields, gettin close to us afore we seed him. "A mournsome tale, too, these owd baulks could make on it, if we could nobbut hear. She was a big ship, you'll see bi th' lumber. We broke her up to clear th' oyster beds down below yon."

"You will have seen many wrecks on this rough coast?"

"Sure I have. And the least of 'em all gave us most trouble in these parts."

"How was that?"

"It'll be so long come Whissun Tuesday, for it happened at Whissuntime. Six stout chaps an' a young woman belongin Knot End set out across t' bay to Lancster. Nobbut one mon ever coome back alive. At dayshine they started, as it met be fro yon point, wi leet hearts enough, thinkin nowt. Afore lond had weel

dhropped at their backs a wave coome—sich a wave it's said as our fisherlads never seed up to that day, an' down their boat went like a hanchor sinkin. Poor bodies! One just conthrove to swim hissen clear—he's a neighbour o' mine to-day—I live again him—an' 'twas all he could do. Twice he gav up, I've oft heerd him tell, but some bit o' life coome to him again an' again. Then, when he dudn't mak lond, he felt all were ower, lettin hissen drift wi th' swell, but thoughts of his wife an' bairns left faytherless coome to him, an' he made one sthroke moore. As goo' luck ud ha't, a farmer wi his son had com'n out to pluff bi daysthrike that mornin, an' seein yon bedrowned lookin thing tossin like among t' yesty watther they gat at him wi a rope. Eh! but it were days an' weeks afore he'd ony grip o' life again."

"Were the other bodies recovered?"

"All on 'em, masther. Yes—every one comes out wi' time. Six souls gone at a clash, as one met say. We're not mony folk at Knot End, you'll see, so at th' funeral it looked as everybody theere had lost a relation among them six. Eh dear! 'Twere a sad day on Wyreside!"

"Sad indeed," Philosopher said. "And yet theese accidents are common to our lot—

> 'All that lives must die,
> Passing through nature to eternity.'"

"That's but a cowd-blooded way to look at it, friend," th' farmer says, rayther sharp. "Mebbe where you come fro folk are plentifuller, for it taks long years i' th' grave to kill a mon at Knot End. It's not just t' carcase, you'll see—it's what a said an' dud when a lived. His wife an' friends 'll see him smile an' hear him talk long afther th' worms finish wi him. Sure we mun die—that's beknown; but all t' betther part on us stops outside th' grave."

"Give us thi neighve, owd cock," aw said. "Aw like to yer thee talk some weel."

He gav me a gripe 'at made me soory aw'd axed him, an' we talked a bit abeaut odd things whol he towd us there'd bin twelve theausan peaund worth ov oysthers takken eaut o' th' river t' year afore, an' that made us so hungry we bowted sthraight wom to see iv th' dinner were ready.

II.

We fund o th' say-voyagers londed safe back when we geet to th' lodgins. They'd kil't a brid among 'em—which on 'em had shot it nobry seemed just to know, nobbut they were o sure it weren't th' pirate; heawever th' diver were theere, plain enough to be sin, wi white fithers an' bleedin throat, so that were o at' matther't owt.

Dinner were sided off middlin soon, for there's no bother wi gettin' appetites into fettle up i' thoose parts, an' th' bowd sportsmen sattl't to goo rabbit shootin next, for a change. As aw fund by sperrin 'at this excitin gam nobbut myent walkin across tuthri fields an lones, aw went wi 'em, makin a bargain wi Comic 'at he mut keep weel at th' front whol he carried a gun, as aw'd no fancy for gainin weight bi gettin two barrelful o' lead dhriven into mi back.

Th' pirate were waitin for us, wi his boots on, his short clay brunnin, an' his face as weel weshed as usal wi londside mariners. It turn't eaut he did a bit o' quiet poachin neaw an' again, when th' black flag were lapped up, an' we took him to be one of thoose experienced owd honds 'at could olez be depended on for findin summat to shoot as long as there were ony game left i' t' counthry. A middlin owd hond we fund him too.

We'd two double-barrels for artillery, so Vamper an' Comic were thrusted wi 'em first, Philosopher an' me gettin weel to th' back, eaut o' danger. In a while we stopped at a hedge, th' pirate poo'd a ferret eaut ov his boots or somewheere an' sent it deawn a rabbit-hole, th' gun carriers stood ready for blowin owt 'at met come into maprags, an' we o gether't reaund watchin wi greight excitement.

When we'd stood happen twenty minutes or hawve-an-heaur th' excitement dwindlt. It began to look deaubtful whether ony rabbits were for comin or not, an' we hardly felt as comfortable i' that cowd fielt as we should ha done bi th' hob-end on a bakin day.

"Are yo sure there's ony rabbits inside, Pirate?" Tenor axed, fair jaded wi stonnin theere doin nowt. "We're noane shappin mich like th' lad 'at mended ov his skennin yet."

"Heaw were that, Tenor?" aw axed him.

"Why, he were a lad up Cronkeyshay Road somewheere. 'Mother,' he says, 'aw am mendin o' mi skennin neaw! Aw con see two things where there nobbut used to be one.' What says ta Pirate? Is there ony rabbits?"

"Happen not," th' buccaneer says, sthrikin a match on his boots, leetin his pipe, shovin his honds into his pockets, an' rearin hissel again th' wynt for another heaur's watchin. "Th' ground's very hard, an' there's no tellin which run we may find 'em in."

"Try another one, then," Philosopher said. "By degrees we may get round them all."

Comic thried to make a joke summat abeaut ten degrees below Nero, but nobry reckon't to yer him.

Th' idea o' shiftin suited everybody's taste, but we'd to wait a while longer for th' ferret comin eaut. He'd fo'n asleep, aw think,

Skennin, squinting.

findin it warmer inside th' run nor eaut, an' there were no knockin him up. At last he showed his sharp wedge ov a nose (nearly gettin his yead blown off, for Vamper thought he were a rabbit stirrin), th' pirate sammed howd on him bi th' neck, an' we started for a likelier spot.

Afther walkin fifteen mile or so we coome to another hedge, an' th' same gam were played o'er again.

"This is noane good enough," Rosin says, stampin to warm his frozzen toes. "Aw met have had a good practice on th' 'cello whol we'n bin loisin time here. Come on Fiddler; let's go wom an' thry a duet."

"I should like to get a rabbit or two first. Come, Pirate; are we likely to find any or not?"

"Couldn't say," t' freeboother towd him. "We met or we metn't."

"There were rabbits enough here last year," Bass says, whatever there may be now."

"We'n hit th' wrong time again," Tenor said. "It were olez so wi me. But th' question's noane so mich what they had last year as what they han neaw. Han yo ony rabbits left, Pirate; that's what aw want to know?"

Th' buccaneer wiped his meauth wi th' back ov his hond an' started explainin things a bit. Th' greaund were hard, he towd us again (as iv we hadn't fund that eaut afther t' miles we'd thrail't afther thoose boots ov his), an' that went again chances o' sport; then, t' rabbits had bin very thick on a while back, but a fairish lot o' crack shots had com'n o'er middlin oft an' thinned 'em eaut; then, as iv new leet had sthricken him, he finished up bi sayin we'd just thry Whiteley's farm, an' off he set on another long-distance sprint at two mile i' th' heaur.

"Look here, mates," aw said, dhroppin to th' back wi Tenor an' Philosopher, "aw've had enough o' this—aw'm satisfied. Aw wain't say a word again good owd English sport; but it's nowt i' my road, as t' thram engine said when it ran up Rush Hill. Aw'm beaun!"

"Same here!" says Tenor. "It's a capper to me heaw they con sell rabbits so chep i' Rachda market, when it taks nine chaps, two guns, an' a ferret hawve a day to miss catchin one."

Philosopher thought he'd had enough too, an' said it looked to him Pirate knew where th' rabbits were, but wanted to keep us eaut o' th' road on' em, so we struck across to th' say, followin it reaund whol we geet wom again. T' last we seed o' th' sportsmen, they were settin a tin can on a rail to shoot at, as they could leet o' nowt wick.

When they geet back Comic towd us he'd com'n very near havin a good shot at th' finish. Just as he were gettin into th' village he seed a little brid pyerched on a three within ten

yard on him, so he cocked his gun, took short aim, an' were just beaun to bang off when an owd woman ran eaut ov a cottage across, skrikin,

"Let a gun off theere iv tha dar, tha young good-for-nowt, close to wheere folk are livin, an' happen wi childher playin 'em somewheere i' that plantin! For shame o' thi face! an' iv we'd a policeman here aw'd have thee locked up, grinnin an' laughin so when tha met do murdher; an' a dyel tha'd care abeaut that aw darsay, so be off wi thee!"

An' off he'd to goo wi his tail between his legs, not even venthurin to ax iv he could sell her a diamond ring. Tenor said, happen that were th' only brid they had abeaut theere, so folk were noane likely to want it shootin. Heawever, sport were o'er wi for that day, an' music set in for th' neet. There were practisin to be done, faces to wesh, Sunday clooas to don, white ties to festen, baggin to swallow; an then off we rowlt in a wagonette to Pilling village, four miles off bi crow-fly, six bi th' heeroad; for as there's no hills theere to climb up an' deawn, th' roads are cut a bit longer reaund nor need be, partly to make up.

Eh! what a do that concert were! A reawmful o' chaps an' women 'at 'd ne'er yerd ony music afore, two or three o' th' quality on a front bench cricketisin everything, a greight squire i' th' cheer, my mates playin an' singin as hard as they could, an' me hutched into a nook, takkin stock ov o 'at stirred an' sayin nowt. O th' pieces met ha bin done twice o'er, iv t' performers had takken ony notice o' th' clappin; an' as for Comic, iv he'd sung o neet some o' th' folk wouldn't ha bin weary.

Th' Squire were so takken up wi th' music 'at he invited us o in a rook to co at his heause next neet, sayin he'd give us summat t'eight an' thry to make us comfortable; so we agreed, an' afore long were off back undher a breet moon. Most o' th' young chaps walked, reckonin nowt o' being crommed into a close carriage i' sich weather as that; so Philosopher an' me had reawm enough inside, and fiddles moore nor enough to tak care on.

Th' moon, as near full as made no matther, swam in a deep peawdher-blue sky. I' th' west Jupither shin't wi never a twinkle. A while afore we'd sin Venus keepin company wi him, but that shy queen had bowted, levin her mate to blaze away bi hissel. Th' owd Bear were clawin his road up to t' north star, never gettin mich nearer for o his theausans o years' wark; th' Pleiads shimmer't an' dither't like a double hondful o' tinsel shavins; a greight jewell't sickle marked where th' Lion took his neet's preawl; an' lower deawn, a clear blue spark, th' Virgin showed her bonny face, keepin hersel weel to hersel, as dacent young women should.

We'd no paved nor levelled road to bother us. Th' owd shanthrydan rowl't away o'er stone or dirt, just as they coome, wortin to one side or t'other, as it happen't, an' leetin back

wi a bump upo th' four wheels at once. Thorn hedges shut us in, followin every turn an' wind o' th' lonely road, t' flat counthry lookin to start back fro us as we rode forrad. What a glorious seet were that level lond, lyin still an' misty undher t' sailin moon! Church spire an' wyntmill creawn, oak-branch an' cottage-window, frosted meadow an' snow-chalked dyke—o touched wi silver leet 'at made no difference for quality or heestonnin, but flooded everything alike, throwin off narrow lines o' black shadow fro t' depth ov it own breetness.

An' what a stillness! When we clatther't an' clanked through a bit ov a roadside village there were no seaund, no spark o' chamber leet, to show wick folk were near; as we clunther't an' jowted o'er th' hard road o th' world looked empty reaund us. To me, used every day to rattlin machinery, that unbrokken stillness had summat awesome in it—but restful, too, an' sweet to th' sense as De Jong Glory roses brunt i' July sun-blaze. Aw began to feel like brastin into poethry, or doin summat else foolish, so hee aw seemed set aboon wark an' throuble.

"Eh, Philosopher!" aw said. "Iv one could jowt an' rowl through life at this comfortable bat, heaw grand it'd be! Aw believe aw mun nobbut ha bin hawve-rocked whol a babby, th' moon's olez sich a peawer o'er me; or its happen ridin wi fiddles 'at's puttin me i' sich rare tune. Aw could just like to ride on so whol th' moon sets."

"You would only get a profound back-ache," he said, laughin at mi foolish talk. "This machine is too cramped for long journeys of the sort you are dreaming of, and stiffened limbs would take the place of sentiment in less than an hour. Learn to break off enjoyment at its height if you would remain happy."

"Ah, to be sure! There's human nathur i' t' road again," aw said; but aw felt he were reet enough, an' argeyed no moore abeaut it.

There'd bin some talk o' gettin up next mornin to shoot divers afore breakfast time, an' th' pirate had promised to be ready wi' his boat; but th' bowd sportsmen were fast asleep long afther t' time set, wearied eaut wi their hard wark th' day afore.

At hawve-past seven Tenor, weshed an' donned, walked into th' bedreawm where Comic an' Fiddler lee together, dhremin their happy hours away, poo'd every rag o' bed clooas off 'em, an' walked quietly deawn th' stairs, sayin nowt. Up beaunced Comic an' Fiddler, swearin chromatic vengeance i' seven flats, donned their breeches, rowl't their shirt-sleeves up, an' set off to kill Tenor whol he dee'd. They fund him smookin bi th' front-reawm fire, pyched in like two stage villains, towd him to get ready for th' worst happenin, an' then laid into him wi o their weight; so Tenor geet howd on 'em, one i' ayther arm, cobbed 'em eaut into th' lobby,

put his cap on, an' went a-walkin whol th' breakfast were getten ready, levin his murdherers to pyke theirsel up as best they could.

A snowstorm coome on that mornin, givin me time to sit restin a bit, findin th' musicians a chance to practise, an' Comic a good oppenin for singin tuthri dozen funny songs, hawkin his jewellery, an' showin off his big pipe. As noon turned we'd fair weather again, so makin short wark wi dinner-shiftin we o made for th' fresh air. Most o' th' lads started for th' pirate's boat again, to see iv they could murdher some moore brids ; but Philosopher, Bass, an' me felt moore i' th' walkin line, an' made for Preesall hill to get a look reaund th' white counthry.

Yo con see o reaund th' Fylde fro that hillock, an' a bit fur beside, for Morecambe bay's i' full seet, ringed reaund wi big meauntains fro Scawfell to Ingleborough. A cleaud o' smooke showed where Barrow furnaces were blazin away, but we were little intheristed i' that, as we'n soot enough awom. Philosopher showed me Sundherland Point, where cotton were first londed, sayin he were noane just sure yet whether we shouldn't ha bin betther off beaut nor wi, for it looked to him there'd bin nowt but bother sin'. Then, turnin toard th' west, we'd Blackpool i' full seet, wi mony another place o' greight fame ; an' Fleetwood lee just undher us, lookin as big as a city ; for we'd catched th' teawn brodeside on, an' it's as fair a definition o' length beaut breadth as ever Euclid fund.

We gawped abeaut whol th' snow-cover't lond gav us o th' e'ewartch, an' then, findin we were close to th' wyntmill, set off to look at that curious buildin. Preesall's one o' thoose little villages 'at looken as iv every chap theere had built his heause to shuit hissel. Th' cottages are dotted abeaut o roads up th' hill side, pointin i' ony direction 'at they met happen to leet in ; so followin th' road 'at winds through yo see heause fronts, sides, backs an' edges, o at once, jumbl't together like a worted box o' childher's buildin breek. There's two big aleheauses (one wi a stone yead as big as a prize cabbitch stuck o'er th' dur), a church, a butcher's shop (wi th' window barred like a jail, as iv th' beef had bin locked up an' hanged for misbehaving itsel), a joiner's yard wheer they maken a breed o' wheelbarrows beaut legs, a blacksmith's forge, a fine heause for t' docthor, an' a pump. Thoose are o cobbed together i' one hondful, as iv they'd bin shutther't fro a cart on th' hilltop, an' stonnin a piece off there's a saut works an' th' wyntmill we'd bin makin for. When th' hedges are crommed wi summer fleawers, an' one con walk reaund beaut havin to wipe his frozzen nose every ten yard, Preesall wain't be hawve a bad shop.

III.

Aw've had scant experience o' wyntmills, an were olez inclin't to raythor look deawn on 'em. To be sure, wi their reaunt shaft ov a buildin an' whizzin sails, they cutten a poor figure again a new spinnin facthry wi its hundherds ov e'en an' greight byem engines; for o they used to swagger so mich afore styem were teed deawn an' gated sich a stir to get loase again.

Middlin o' wynt were blowin across th' hill, an' as we coome near to th' long sweepin arms aw were capped to find what turnin peawer they were makin. One cleaut fro one o' thoose swingin timbers 'd be enough to sattle a footbo dispute, an' that's sayin middlin.

As we geet up to th' bottom dur a chap looked eaut, so aw said to him,

"Yo'n thirty or forty horse peawer rivin away here, maisther. Whatever con yo do wi o that?"

"We want it often enough when all the stones are running," he said, smilin at us. "There's a good deal of machinery in this place."

Aw looked at th' buildin, taperin up like a chimbley, thinkin to mysel their machinery took little enough reawm to ston in at that rate; but he took us in, showin us o through fro top to bottom, an' aw've thought betther o' wyntmills ever sin'.

A vertical shaft runs through th' mill, like a spindle through a cop, turnin o their tackle bi cog wheels an counther-shafts. Sich gearin yo never seed! There's no inch o' reawm to waste, an' it's fair laughable to see heaw sthraps an' pulleys are dodged into nooks an' cracks, fixed slantin or sthraight, yead up or yead deawn, reet-honded or keigh-wusk, just as they'll best fit.

They'd three pair o' stones runnin when we co'd, an' th' shoots were teemin eaut fleaur, meighl, an oats in a steady sthrem, a fattenin, dusty, wholsome flavvour hangin abeaut 'em. To be sure th' miller an' his men were noane fat, happen becose they'd no reawm to groo inside theere, but they'd o a rare healthy look abeaut 'em, an' th' miller hissel were a sthrong, limber sample, as fit to run, wrostle, jump, or feight, as ony chap ever aw seed.

We climbed up five stories, crawlin up steps set nearly sthraight on end, findin every chamber crom-full o' summat—bins, fans, hoppers, secks, stones, runnin gear, thrap-durs, an' whatnot—looked into a big dhryin chamber, where th' grain's baked afore grindin, an' slipped through a little dur onto a platform 'at runs o reaund th' eautside, a grand view o' lond an' say brastin on us sudden as gunshot.

Keigh-wusk, left-handed.

"Well, miller," aw said, "tha's getten us up reet enough, whether we s' get deawn again wick or not. Thoose stairs wanten fettlin some ill."

"Do they?" he says, unconsarn't. "I never noticed it."

Aw don't believe he ever had, noather, for aw'd watched him swing hissel up an' deawn his steep laddhers bi th' hond-rope, nobbut touchin abeaut one step i' four; but they're shockin bad pairs o' stairs for o that. He showed us heaw th' sails wortched, wi an owd-fashion't dodge for steadyin th' wynt, whistl't, laughed, an' looked as leet-hearted as ony miller could do.

Philosopher whisper't to us, "This miller seems of different stamp from that selfish old curmudgeon on the Dee, who cared for nobody and wanted nobody to care for him. To hear Bass sing that lilting song anybody would think the morality of it sound enough, but if you start analysing the rubbish——"

"Gently!" Bass says. "How many popular songs *will* bear analysis. You had better not meddle with that subject."

Oather this chance talk abeaut songs or summat else set a bit ov a rhyme buzzin through mi yead, an' made me wondher heaw th' miller hissel felt abeaut his wark. Aw took stock on him, wi his brode back, thin flank, comely face, an' fringe o' black curls creepin fro undher his dusty cap; an' tuthri days afther tinker't up this ditty, wi a dictionary, two pipes o' bacca, an' a dyel o yead-rubbin. That's heaw most extempore verses are petched up, aw darsay.

THE MILLER.

Preesall miller stands high to view
  Meadow and breaking wave,
Far uplifted above the crew
Wandering flat and valley through,
  And cheerfully sings a stave—
  "Blow, wind! Sails, swing round!
    Here's the Fylde harvest come to be ground!"

Gather, winds, over the bay,
  Whirling the sails about!
Landward breezes, strive as ye may,
Mill and miller this many a day
  Have welcomed your rebel rout!
  "Blow, wind! Sails, swing round!
    Here's the Fylde harvest come to be ground!"

Shoot flowing and hopper filled,
  Steadily turns the stone;
Miller and men, to the labour skilled,
Know right well the hard grain is milled
  By diligent toil alone.
  "Blow, wind! Sails, swing round!
    Here's the Fylde harvest come to be ground!"

Fettlin, repairing.

Flowery fields beneath are spread,
  Birds sweet choruses make ;
Soon as shines the sun o'erhead,
Corn's a-grinding to give us bread,
  Millers are early awake.
  " Blow, wind ! Sails, swing round !
    Here's the Fylde harvest come to be ground ! "

Long, miller, toil and rest,
  Driving thy wholesome trade ;
Travel, sun, from east to west !
Drop, rain, on the earth's warm breast,
  Fostering ear and blade !
  " Blow, wind ! Sails, swing round !
    Many's the harvest yet to be ground ! "

We geet scrambl't deawn beaut ony neck-breighkin, lost i' wondher to see what quantities o' stuff could be fitted into sich a smo-lookin buildin, said good-day to th' friendly corn squeezer, an' wandher't off toard th' saut-mine.

We fund a borin theere like a coalpit shaft, two hundherd an' fifty yard deep, an' hawve road deawn we could see brine runnin reaund a metal tank. Fro theere it's pumped into a lodge eautside, an' made into saut afore it knows what's happenin to it. We watched two sthrong chaps go deawn in a bucket, their leeted candles dwindlin to sparks, but felt no fancy for followin, thinkin we should be shoved undhergreaund soon enough beaut gooin o' purpose. Then, as baggin time were gettin close, we turn't toard wom again.

As we coome near to th' village we seed a procession walkin deawn a cross-lone fro th' river side. Hawve a dozen chaps marched one behinnd another as iv they were playin at red Indians, some carryin guns, some wi bags, o on 'em wi their yeads hangin deawn an' teeth set.

" What unfortunate men are these?" Philosopher axed, stoppin to wait for th' miserable objects comin up. " Some great calamity appears to have befallen them. There must have been a wreck on the coast."

" There is something strangely familiar in the aspect of yonder mournful crew," Bass said, starin. " They can hardly be our friends wandering over the country in that fashion, and yet—— Do mine eyes deceive me, or are those the pirate's boots I behold ?"

" There's no deaubt abeaut it," aw said. " They're eaur lads, an' a bonny mess they'n getten into bi th' look on 'em. They'n bin dhreawn't or summat."

Th' pirate coome up, marchin past beaut a word, gun o'er his shooldher, pipe i' meauth, soppin weet fro yead to foot, th' long boots brim full o' wayther. Comic towd me afther 'at when th' chap geet wom he thried to poo his boots off just to empty th'

weet eaut; but that couldn't be done, as he'd worn t' things day an' neet for mony a month, an' his feet had groon into 'em; so he were forced to ston on his yead an' dhrain 'em eaut that road.

Poor Comic! He coome next i' th' row, wi desperate little jokin abeaut him, his merry black e'en deawnkest, his yure eaut o' curl, too far gwone to oather grin or wink, to say nowt ov offerin his diamond, as he passed. Tenor followed, thryin to howd his weet breeches off his legs as he walked; Fiddler were next, steppin eaut bowdly wi his gun as iv he ail't nowt, thinkin moore ov other folk nor hissel, as usal; Rosin an' Vamper coome crawlin at th' tail end, like two o' Pharaoh's sodiers just poo'd eaut o' th' Red Say. Not a chirp, not a whistle among 'em, they shiver't on through th' keen wynt, aimin at nowt but gettin wom an' weel shut o' their weet clooas.

Th' tale coome eaut at baggin time when th' lads had getten dhried an' warmed again. No moore diver shootin for *them*—that were sattl't! They'd let on a gale, had th' boat hawve full, an as near as a toucher done some divin theirsel. Th' pirate hissel had bin freeten't, an' had to run two mile up th' river afore he durst lond.

Heawever, things met ha bin wur, an' it geet time to think abeaut shappin toard th' Squire's iv we myent gooin, for we'd a five-mile ride to face. Th' owd wagonette turn't up afore long, an' we went beawlin away deawn th' frosty road as lively as crickets. Comic had getten his spirits up again, an' there were no end to his talk an' gam. His tongue hardly ever stopped whol we londed at th' greight heause, an' were bundl't eaut into a cowd garden.

We were noane cowd long. Iv onybody's a betther notion o' makin folk feel awom nor yon Squire, aw want to be knowin where that body is. First we were turn't into a comfortable reawm to get warm, then some ribs o' beef were set afore us, an' afther that we were ta'en forrad to make friends wi a lot moore visithors. We fund th' Squire had getten up a greight party, axin a lot ov his neighbours to meet us distinguished music artistes; an' a tidy meetin we made on it among us.

Aw never let across a bigger breed o' chaps nor th' Fylde farmers. Wi say-wayther at one elbow an' rich lond at t'other they're likely to be healthy, an' one look at 'em satisfies onybody 'at they are so. Tenor's a steaut, sthrong, chap, but he dwindl't again thoose red-faced giants, wi their big limbs as hard as iv th' flesh had bin fair hommer't on. An' th' young women! Eh, bless their bonny faces! They danced, they played th' piano, they chatther't like robins, they sit still lookin pratty, an' they made me feel young again i' tuthri minutes.

In a crack there were quadhrilles gooin' i' one pahlour an' music in another, an' a warm nook were fund in a third reawm for

quiet chaps to smooke or talk in. Philosopher an' me were among that lot, but t'other lads were friskin abeaut i' o directions. Aw should think iv Tenor sung one song he sung twenty, fillin his time up wi dancin. Bass an' Comic sung an' danced too, Fiddler an' Rosin played solos on their weel-tuned sthrings, an' Vamper were kept busy helpin 'em o eaut.

Fiddler i' particlar were just in his glory, an' did wark enough for hawve-a-dozen. Beside playin, singin, an' dancin, he were like a maisther o' ceremonies, an' wapped abeaut as wick as a scopperil, keepin th' gam goöin, smoothin awkwart corners off, weel plez't hissel, an' plezin everybody he coome near.

It's a bonny heause, crommed wi curiosities gether't fro very near every part o' th' world. Every reawm's full o' neck-nacks, picthers woth scores o' peaunds hangin on th' woles, an' bits o' things woth a dyel o' gowd scatther't o'er shelves an' tables. What a lot o' dustin an' clenin they mun want. Aw wondher if th' Squire's ony moore comfortable among his grand things nor aw am i' mi nook at th' hob-end awom. Heawever, that's no business o' mine. It were enough for me to find 'at he'd no set on him becose ov his brass, an' to see him bring two poor owd widows in to get their share o' th' good things, mixin 'em a glass o' summat warm wi his own honds.

Midneet coome afore we knew what ailed us, an' then we'd splutther enough packin fiddles up, seein th' young women wom, gearin th' wagonette, an' gettin fairly started off; but we shapped to get back to bed at last, th' breet moon shinin at us as wakken as ever, an' next mornin thravell't back to Rachda once again.

Ah well! Breet days, sadly too short an' rayther o'er cowd, yo're gwone like a dhrem! Among t' clattherin looms aw con yer a cluntherin seaund o' wagonette wheels on a frozzen road, or sometimes th' grindin rub o' mill-stones, an' mony a sweet song an' tune catched fro thoose lively music chaps hangs i' mi ears yet. Nobbut two short days! Heaw these little halidays gilden th' dark edges ov every day wark, levin a glint 'at shows for mony a year! Aw've met Comic sin' we geet back. He put a dismal look on, an said,

"I left my pipe at the Squire's."

"What pipe?" aw said. "That o'er-groon thing wi a yead big enough for a stew-mug?"

"Yes. You saw it at Knot End."

"Seed it! Aw should think so! Who could miss seein it? But ne'er mind, lad, it'll come in useful theere."

"How so?"

"They'll upend it for a garden stoo."

"Perhaps so, but the matter shall Knot End there," he says. Aw sthretched eaut mi hond to throttle him, but he'd bowted,

> "And like the baseless fabric of a vision
> Left not a wrack behind."

CALDER VALLEY.

I.

AS frost-bitten May crawl't shiverin past an' June coome smilin (a coolish smile) o'er th' hill tops, scatherin a bratful o' fleawers across th' green meadows, an' touchin up t' winther-worn scenery wi lines o' gowd sunleet, aw bethought me 'aw'd promised th' poet to goo a-seein him i' Spring. Aw wrote axin him iv he were wick, an iv he thought it woth while waitin for Spring ony longer afore he invited me, an' geet a letther back in a snift tellin me to start bi t' next thrain. That were rayther too sudden, so aw'd to put him off a bit, takkin time to sattle things so 'at th' teawn could spare me for a day or two. Aw'm so little used to levin wom an' mi wife behinnd me, 'at bwoth th' owd woman an' me felt as mich put abeaut as iv it were a Merica thrip aw were framin for. Th' owd dame seed me off at th' station one Friday mornin, givin me moore advice nor aw could reckon to think on; an' long aw looked at her cheerful face as th' rapid wheels rowl't me away, whol t' loveleet fro her fadin e'en were shinin through mi heart, as it has done for moore years nor con soon be reckon't up.

At Smithybridge a pratty rosy young woman climbed into th' carriage, a thin tallish chap carryin a concertina box jumped in afther her, an' we were off again.

"Arta sure thoose tickets are safe, Tommy?" 't lass co'd eaut, makin a greight fuss wi a parasol, cloak, an' a little sthraw basket. "It'll be a bonny job iv tha's lost 'em!"

"They're reet enough," t' young chap says quietly, leighnin back in his corner an' startin to whistle.

"Do give o'er whistlin!" t' lass said in a minute or two. "Tha'rt like never reet beaut makin some din or another. Eh! aw wish we were weel through this tunnel! Heaw mony mile long is it, dost say?"

"Less nor forty," th' whistler said, lookin at her an' then at me wi a sly twinkle in his restless e'en.

Aw knew that twinkle in a crack, an' th' twinkler too, for o his new billycock, Sunday clooas, an' smart tie.

"Aw've sin thee afore, somewheere," aw said, starin at him.

"Aw darsay yo han," he says. "Aw'm middlin weel known through dhrivin abeaut so mich wi mi emporium. It wouldn't be at a brid show, would it?"

"Nowe; tha were grindin sithers up Bury Road, pyerch't on thi emporium, as tha co's it. Aw know thee neaw. Done they co thee Scowcroft awom?"

"Oh! yo known him; that's plain enough," his lass broke in. "He'd be makin some mak ov a foo ov hissel when yo seed him, aw expect."

"Goo on!" Scowcroft said, quietly. "Aw'll let thee talk ony road tha's a mind to-day."

"Is this thi wife?" aw axed him.

"Hoo will be in another heaur or two," he said, an' t' young woman flushed like a fire-back. "Hoo's like swaggerin o'er mi to-day, done yo see? Yo mun think nowt on her talkin so fast; it's nobbut excitement. Hoo's noane used to bein wed yet."

"What! yo're beaun a gettin wed are yo? Heaw the hangment hasta shapped to make time for that arrand? Is thrade slacker nor it were?"

"It isn't so!" he co'd eaut. "Nowe; it's bin a job gettin off for a whol hawve day, aw con tell yo that. Why, mon, iv aw'd as mony honds an' feet as a eddycrop aw could ne'er catch up to mi wark neaw."

"What done yo think?" t' lass axed me, jumpin as we went wi a whush into th' tunnel. "He acshally wanted t' weddin to come off at Smobridge, so as he could get some gardenin done afther it. He'll teaw hissel to t' dyeath wi wark. But aw'll stop some o' this scrattin, lad!"

"Tha knows weel enough heaw backart aw've getten wi th' sallet beds," Scowcroft said. "It's nobbut cobbin time an' brass away goin to Tormorden; iv we'd getten teed up awom aw could just ha slipped mi jacket on, weshed mi honds, an' bin ready, an' then ha' shifted some wark afore baggin time. Aw've lost a dyel o' time latly wi cwortin, beaut loisin moore neaw when aw'm takkin another meauth to keep. We s' do weel iv we con piece a livin together, aw'll tell thee. That just puts me i' mind! Aw mun slip up to Shore i' t' mornin wi yon bottle o' leeches."

"What's t' concertina for?" aw axed, to get th' poor fellah's mind off his throubles. "Arta for serenadin thi wife afther yo're teed together, or tha'rt for gooin reaund t' sthreets singin for thi expenses."

"Nay, come! he's noane as poor as that, shuzheaw!" t' lass frapped eaut. "We'll come noane a-beggin off *yo* when we wanten summat."

"Be quiet witha," Scowcroft laughed. "Yo moan't cob jokes at her maisther; hoo con ne'er see 'em. Aw'm takkin mi music-box to play th' Weddin March on."

"Tha never says! Aw should ha' thought tha'd enough i' thi mind beaut that."

Eddycrop, spider. *Teaw*, to toil hard.

"It *will* be a bit awkart, aw deaubt," he said, thinkin o'er it. "Aw could ha' brought a mate to play for me, but he's like nobbut a one-finger player—yo'n yerd sich like, aw darsay—reet hond grindin th' tune eaut one finger at once, whol th' lift gwoes tee, pum pum! tee, pum pum! o through. That's noane good enough for a weddin, is it?"

"Hardly, for sure. Tha met a letten him ston wi th' young woman, put t' ring on an' sich; waitin thisel, ready to sthrike up."

"Hoo'd happen ha' bin t'other chap's wife, then! That'll do noane! Iv aw miss this chance aw s' ne'er find time enough to start again. Shall aw, Sarah?"

"Talk sense!" hoo snapped, lookin as iv hoo thought us bwoth idiots.

"It's a bit botherin, done yo see," Scowcroft went on. "A concertina's hardly a reet thing in a church, is it? Aw'd betther get to th' dur; or happen eautside on th' steps ud be t' best. We s' see heaw it leets. Aw ne'er larn't to play th' orgin, or else it met ha bin betther shapped."

"It's abeaut th' only job tha missed larnin, aw think. Here's Walsden."

"Ah! Sthraight up an' deawn, like a coalpit shaft. There's no wondher at folk bein born claw-footed in a hole like this."

"What makes 'em claw-footed?"

"It's wi havin so mony broos to climb, mon. They getten fitted to their surreaundin, as Professor Huxley says,—"

"What! arta thick wi him too?"

"Aw yerd him lecthur once, that's o. He's reet enough, too. Han yo ne'er noticed heaw croot necked folk getten wi suppin brewery ale an' eightin shop loaf?"

"Nowe; that's news."

"Why, yo mun be blint! It's nowt but evolution, that isn't. This ud be a rare shop for tobogganin iv they'd plane their broos smooth."

"It's moore nor that abeaut it," aw said. "Comin deawn th' side o' yon big hill there's one o' th' bonniest cloughs to be fund onywheere upo these moors. Iv tha wants to sit dhremin hawve a day or so, make for Ramsden Wood, an' tha'll be reet."

"Ah, but I don't," Scowcroft said. "Aw've no time for that mak o' wark, an' there's gawpyeads enoo moonin reaund beaut me startin. Dhremin, say'n yo! Why, mon, aw'd sooner goo catchin bull-joans or jack-sharps nor idle mi time away otogether."

"Aw darsay tha'rt reet."

"Be hanged to dhremin ov o' maks! There's ne'er nowt nobbut lies an' bother at th' end on't. Con aw sell yo a ticket for a cut fleawer show; aw'm howdin one i' three week. They're

Broos, hills. *Bull-joans*, tadpoles.

nobbut sixpence apiece, an' everybody's a chance o' winnin a copper kettle, two chimbly orniments, or a lecthro-plated gardenin threawel. Come iv yo con—it'll be a good do."

"For shame o' thysel, Tom," his lass said, colourin up. "Let th' owd chap a-be, an' think moore abeaut what we han agate."

"Nay! it's too lat for that," Scowcroft says, pocketin his tickets wi a deep sigh; "aw'm fairly londed. Aw deaubt we shan't get back afore dark." He looked eaut o' th' window wi a long face, fell to whistlin again, an' then jumped on his feet, starin hard up th' hillside.

"Well, aw'll be hanged!" he co'd eaut.

"Whatever's to do, Tom?" t' young woman axed him.

"What's to do!" grunted Scowcroft, wi a disgusted face. "This is a bonny come off, this is!"

"What is?" aw said, lookin hard up th' brooside, but seein nowt. "What complaint hasta catched, o ov a sudden?"

"Look theere!" he says, pointin; "cawn't yo see thoose heauses? Yo ne'er seed a row o' cottages built in a stone-pit afore, did yo?"

"Nowe; not 'at aw know on. But there's nowt abeaut that to get mad o'er."

"Aw wouldn't be so soft iv aw were thee," t' lass put in.

"Aw ne'er could abide sich idleness as yon sin' aw're wick," he went on. "Iv it isn't a slap i' t' chops for a hard-wortchin fellah like me happen yo'll mention one. Takkin th' heauses to th' quarry, becose they're too idle to shift their stone when they'n getten it! Iv that's ony credit to Walsden it's a licker to me!"

He sattl't hissel back on th' shet as iv he were fair knocked o'er bi sich shockin carryins on, but his twinklin e'en belied his talk.

We soon dhrew up at Tormorden, where th' happy couple geet eaut, wishin me a good day.

"Same to yo," aw said. "Let's hope yo'll ne'er repent o' this business, but live happy an' rear a big family."

"Howd on!" Scowcroft says. "Don't be i' sich a hurry, owd brid!"

"Next time tha gwoes to Rachda look into th' Baum Chapel grave-yard. There's a stone theere tells ov a woman 'at 'd twenty-five childher i' less nor twelve year."

Scowcroft were just gettin eaut, an' when he yerd that he nearly fell off th' step.

"That's a flogger!" he said, turnin reaund wi a freeten't face. "There'd ha bin no weddin to-day iv aw'd known so mich afore. Childher com'n raythor too expensive for my fancy, an' look what time there is wasted botherin wi 'em."

"Tha'll want hawve-a-dozen lads, shuzheaw 'tis when thi business comes to be divided. There'll be a joiner, sithers grindher, brid fancier, quack docthor, gardener, an' barber to find fro somewhere."

"An' what shall aw be doin mysel at that time?"

"Tha'll be i' t' warkheause," aw said. "Tha lives middlin hondy, so there'll be no greight expense i' cartin thee theere; an' tha'll be like to start dhremin then whether tha wants or not."

"By gum, Sally! he's noane fur wrong," th' happy bridegroom said, festenin me in an' talkin to me through t' window. "Yo're off neaw, owd scholar. Co in an' see us at Smobridge. There's a glint i' yor e'en aw like to watch, an' yo'll be welcome to a bite an' sup as long's we con afford it. Come soon, or aw s' happen ha' brokken."

He looked at me wi th' owd sly grin as aw rowl't away, an' set off wi th' concertina box undher his arm, a dyel betther plez't wi his job nor he wanted to make eaut, aw felt sure. Aw thought to mysel he'd getten a reet sort ov a wife; one 'at 'd tak care on him, stop his restless mind fro wearin him away, an' save him fro hardenin into a scrattin miser when he geet owd, as left to hissel he'd be sure to do wi his love for wark and want o' confidence i' time to come. Which are most to be pitied, too-careful folk or too-carless? An' heaw is it we're o just careful enough i' eaur own opinion, an' just otogether wrong i' everybody else's?

But aw were i' no shop for moralisin. He would be a dismal chap 'at couldn't feel breet an' hopeful whol rowlin through this grand valley, wi th' steep-slantin hills risin i' rich-wooded shelves to reet an' lift, sweepin forrad i' bowd lines—cool green again th' breet blue sky—to melt far off into th' greight Vale o' York. We left Tormorden lyin in th' oppen meauth o' Burnley twitch, an' coome to Eastwood, hud away in it quiet shady corner. T' little river Calder had bin runnin bi th' line side awhile, mindin it own business as weel-behaved rivers should, but here it fund itsel sadly i' th' road. For o it's sich ancient reets to th' valley, nobbut just wide enough here for a river 'at likes to keep itsel respectable, it's bin shoved o' one side, elbowed into nooks, an' used shameful, to make reawm for a main road, a canel, an' a railway; an' neaw th' owd waytherstid dhribbles on, like a worneaut fayther among groon-up sons, blushin a deep rich blue-black wi th' sulks.

T' Calder's wur used nor th' Roch, an' that's bad enough. Aw've sin 'em bwoth gush i' breet jets fro their moss an' yeth cover't springs on Blacksnedge an' Cliviger, rompin deawn th' moor sides in a hurry to come eaut i' th' world, one thryin th' east road to fortin, one takkin it chance to'ard th' west, an' watched 'em bwoth come to th' same sad slutchy end; so aw'm like to feel for 'em a bit, an' dhrop a sympathisin hanketcherful ov e'e-weet into their unweshed floods.

We went on again, through widenin views o' wood an' hill, past Hebden Bridge, an' undher t' brode green sweep o' Skip Hill an' Erringden. "Royd! Royd!" t' porthers bawlt, wakkenin me up, an' aw geet eautside, nearly fo'in o'er John, stonnin ready for me on th' platform.

E'e-weet, tears.

II.

Aw guess iv we'd bin Frenchmen we should ha sammed howd o' one another reaund th' neck, sthruck some attitudes on th' station flags, an' happen bin foos enough to kuss one another; iv we'd bin Italians we met ha griped neighves, hopped reaund o' one leg, an' jabber't like ducks eightin gravel; or iv we'd bin browt up Garmany road on happen we should nobbut ha grunted an' kept bwoth honds hud in eaur pockets. As it were we rubbed neighves an' John said,

"How are you? A fine day, isn't it?"

Aw towd him aw were o reet, an' t' day were reet too, axed him heaw *he* felt, fund he wore no wur for his winther's keep, an' away we went beaut ony moore fuss through th' owd-fashion't village, past ancient stone-slated heauses built long afore cellars were fund eaut, judgin bi t' quantity o' coalholes kept eautside, an' on bi th' Elfin brook.

"Hello!" aw co'd eaut, pooin up to hearken some clock chimes just sthrikin. "There's sombry knows aw'm here. Yer thee!"

"What's the matter?"

"Yon chimes. Yo'n stown them fro th' Rachda Teawn Ho. It's just th' very same jingle, nobbut wi less bells."

"You have more likely borrowed ours. I suspect this church clock has chimed for more years than your Town Hall has stood."

"An' will do afther it's fo'n deawn, happen, for it taks as mich proppin up as a wambly haystack."

As we walked aw towd him abeaut Scowcroft gooin to be wed, an' when he yerd o' th' concertina he nearly dhropped wi laughin. Aw'd to ston waitin awhile whol he geet his fit o'er, an' he kept brastin eaut every neaw an' again o afthernoon wi thoughts o' th' Smobridger playin away at th' church dur. We wandhered forrad a good way, levin th' teawn behinnd us, meetin nobry but a little owd chap wrostlin wi a bad coughin fit.

"You sound bad to-day, Simon," John says, stoppin to have a word wi him.

"It's this yesterly wind, ye knaw," th' owd fellah gasped when he geet a bit ov his own wind again. "It gets intul mi bronsical tubes, like, in a way, as 'twere. It's well to be *ye*, sir."

"Don't be envious, Simon. 'Passion accursed!' says the dramatist. How is your wife?"

"Shoo's varra well—varra well. Ah dean't knaw as shoo could be in a geysomer rooad than shoo is noo."

"What mak o' lingo's that, lad?" aw axed, as we walked forrad. "Aw s' begin thinkin yo'n some dialect abeaut here soon."

Wambly, shaky.

"The old man comes from the Bradford neighbourhood—Eccleshill, Baildon, Apperley Bridge, Esholt, Gomersal, were the scenes of his youth. Did you ever hear of the Gomersal poet, Herbert Knowles?"

"Nowe, aw think not."

"He died at nineteen years of age, or you *would* have heard of him before now. Southey thought highly of his ability, and sent him £30, subscribed by himself, Sam Rogers, and Lord Spencer, to help forward the lad's education. He would have made a high position, but time was denied him."

"Poor lad! Nobbut nineteen, tha says? Why, th' world ud just be oppenin afore his seet then! It looks a greight pity."

"A pity indeed. The 'inevitable hour' came and he passed into

> 'The shadows of eve that encompass the gloom,
> The abode of the dead, and the place of the tomb,'

as he himself wrote in Richmond Churchyard."

We kept thrailin forrad, getting fur an' fur eaut o' th' teawn, whol at last aw gated wondherin wherever t' chap were takkin me to.

"Heaw mich fur, John?" aw axed him. "Hast flitted fro Mytholmroyd, or heaw?"

"No, we shall be at home in a minute. We live in the suburbs, you see."

"Tha lives i' t' counthry, moore like," aw said. "There's moore rhuburb nor suburb abeaut this as fur as aw con tell. We s' be up at Turvin i' hawve a crack."

"Not quite. You know the way to Turvin then, it appears."

"Know it! Aw've bin here long afore ever aw knew thee lad. It's soon i' th' year yet to see things at their best, particlar wi this backart spring, or we met ha thrail't up th' clough."

"Come over again at the fall of summer and you will find the glen in all its beauty. The trees will be full of foliage, touched by autumn's scorching finger, the undergrowth of ferns and wild-flowers at its highest point of luxuriance. At that season old Blackstone-edge puts on his gayest apparel, filling the background with scented beds of purple heath, grouse whirr and cackle up the hillsides, and the plover's melancholy cry adds a peculiar effect of desolation to the silent valley. It is a beautiful place at any season, though."

"It is that! Aw've followed t' brook deawn mony a time fro wheere th' first ribbin o' weet runs across th' moor top, getherin as it fo's, whol it leets dashin an' grumblin among th' moss-groon stones undher t' Crag, in t' bonniest little nook o' th' sort ever aw clapped e'en on. Cotton an' woollen han spoilt so mony o' these dingles for us 'at we may weel be fain to find sich a grand sample left."

In a bit we coome to a heause stonnin bi itsel again th' hill-side, wi threes abeaut it an' fleawer beds i' th' front.

John oppen't th' garden gate, an' in wi went, marchin up th' carriage dhrive like five hundherd a year chaps. T' front dur stood oppen, so we went sthraight forrad through a big enthrance lobby into th' sittin-reawm, where we fund a pratty young woman playin wi two little lasses. John said he mut inthrojuce me to his wife, so hoo coome up to shake honds, an' we'd a good look at one another.

"Yo'n a rare bonny face o' yor own, missis," aw said. "Iv yo're owt like as good as pratty yor husbant's getten a wife summat like he desarves. Yo'll be Yokshire bred, aw darsay."

"Yes, I am," hoo says, laughin a bit at mi plain talk. "I was born within sight of the wolds, and have hardly ever been outside the county since."

"Nay, sure! That's quare, wi so mony chep thrips as we han neaw. Arta fyert o' loisin her, John, iv hoo levs wom?"

"Not in the least. Although we are old married folks she has enough affection left to bring her back. The fact is we are so comfortable here that we never think of going anywhere else."

"An' these two pratty childher? Are these yors?"

"These are my twin daughters," John said. "They are christened Emmeline and Flora (you can distinguish Flora by that curl over the left ear), but are commonly known in the family as Judy and Bridget; they are three years old, have healthy appetites, and generally constitute themselves one of the greatest plagues of my existence."

T' little lasses an' t' mother laughed as iv they were used to yerin him talk nonsense that road.

"Dar aw sit deawn o' these grand velvet cheers!" aw axed next. "Hard wood uns are o aw've been used to."

"Sit down by all means," t' missis said, "and I will get you a mug of beer after your walk."

"A mug!" aw co'd eaut, jumpin up an' starin at her. "Well, yo're a smart un, jokin at me that road! Somebdy mun ha towd yo aw like ale."

"Nobody at all," hoo says, "and I am not joking in the least, as you shall very soon see."

Away hoo went, comin back dhirectly wi a pitcher an' some chaney pots. "Now," hoo says, "here is your mug; tell me where the joke is."

"Oh, that's what yo co'n a mug, is it?" aw splutther't eaut, fair brastin wi laughin. "We co'n them gill pots i' Rachda, an' t' lessest ov eaur mugs ud howd four or five gallon. Con yo see th' joke neaw?"

Hoo seed it wi a wap, an' worted o'er on th' fine sofy, howdin her sides an' laughin whol tears rowl't deawn her cheeks. We geet

o'er it i' time, an' t' missis went off to shap some dinner; so aw geet thick wi th' childer, settin their busy little tongues waggin like bell-hommers. They were as mich alike as two pins, an' fair puzzl't me to sort 'em eaut. At last aw teed Judy a bit o' ribbin reaund her arm, like a warp ticket, an' that sattl't o t' bother.

John showed me reaund his garden an' green heauses, fillin mi yead full o' long Latin names an' makin me wondher heawever mony sorts o' plants there could be i' t' counthry. Last ov o we geet among sallet an' gooseberry beds, an' th' show were o'er, so we set off back to see iv th' dinner were ready.

"I am proud of my flowers," John said as we went. "Don't you think the collection a good one?"

"It's reet enough," aw said, "iv they'd nobbut bin kessen't gradely. Thoose long jawcrackin names takken o' th' scent eaut on 'em. But tha's getten thi two bonniest buds betther labell't nor t'other, shuzheaw."

"I don't understand."

"These two rare blossoms," aw said, lookin up at his childher, pyerch't on mi shooldhers, stickin on bi mi yure, makin o' th' garden ring wi their merry sheauts. "These are th' finest plants aw've sin to-day, an' they'll tak some careful rearin. Mind that ribbin, my love! Iv it slips off tha'll be lost."

He said aw were reet, an' when we geet inside towd his wife what aw'd bin sayin. It shuited her, aw could see, an' hoo took as mich care on me an' waited on me afther as iv aw'd bin a member o' parliament, or some other sort ov helpless chap. Thoose little bonny things would sit on mi knees they reckon't, but aw could have etten nought wi 'em theere; heawever one climb't up, an' that made t'other ston cryin becose it were left eaut, so deawn jumped th' climber to wipe it sisther's e'en wi it little pinny an' kiss her betther. Then nowt ud do but they mut have their cheers next to mine, makin me t' centhrepiece ov a new design o' Beauty an' Ugliness, an' slat mi jacket sleeves weel wi gravy.

"Tha's a grand shop on it here, John" aw said. "Doesta wortch for thi livin, or heaw? It mun tak middlin to keep this heause up."

"I am a bank clerk," he says, "and am well paid. I make money by music, too; and then my writings ——"

"Ah! what abeaut thi writins? Conta make brass bi them?"

"Certainly they have not been very profitable yet. I can wait."

"You can worry, and lose sleep, and fret yourself into ill-nesses," t' missis put in. "That's about all the good your writing will ever do."

"Hit him again!" aw said. "Poets are fair gam for ony-body to shoot at, though I hardly expected to find bullets flyin in his own heause. Give him t'other barrel!"

They bwoth laughed, an' t' wife colour't a bit.

"Don't misunderstand her," John said. "She would like to see me taking life easily, getting through my necessary work and troubling myself no further. The advice is sensible enough, too, and springs from love; but it will never alter my deep-rooted vices, so you will have to put up with 'em, my dear."

"You mun encourage him to goo forrad, missis," aw said. "A bit o' yeadwartch neaw an' again wain't hurt him, an' he'll happen turn eaut summat good yet. Beside, writin keeps folk eaut o' mischief."

"And gets them into it many a time," John laughed.

"Well, there's summat i' that, lad, as aw've fund eaut mysel. But aw reckon tha'll nobbut do thi own road, shuz what onybody says to thee. Arta writin for fame, or brass, or what?"

"I don't know. I should keep on making verses even if I knew that nobody beside myself would ever read them, so it can't be the money-making instinct that impels me. A desire for fame may be permitted to a man of real greatness, but in me would be nothing more than childish vanity. *That* is not the reason of my absurd practices. I can't give a satisfactory reason, nor explain how it happens that I plod along with never-tiring diligence at this business, although anything but a plodding man by nature.

'I only sing because I must,
And pipe but as the linnets.'"

"Keep on, lad," aw towd him. "It plezes thee an' hurts nobry, an' tha'll happen get to be appreciated in a bit. Talkin ov appreciation reminds me o' Jimmy Dyson. Did aw ever tell thee abeaut Jimmy?"

"I don't remember."

"Well, tha knows, Jimmy were owd Spanker bookkeeper. He'd had th' shop nearly twenty year, an' getten on very weel wi his maisther obbut for a bit ov a frappin-up neaw an' again, for Spanker were olez very short-temper't. Heawever, one day they geet across, some road, an' Jimmy geet a fortnit's notice. He finished his time up, an' then, afore he left, went into t' maisther's private office to ax for a testimonial. As soon as he'd getten his yead in Spanker looked up fro his writin an co'd eaut, 'Neaw, Jimmy, it isn't a bit o' use thee comin beggin on again! Aw've had enough.'

'Me too,' Jimmy says. 'Aw'm just beaun; but yo're noane for turnin me off beaut a charicther, are yo, afther o these years? Heaw am aw to get another shop at that speed?'

'Nay, aw'll gi thee a line or so,' Spanker said; an' afther fingerin his yead a bit he wrote tuthri lines, axin Jimmy iv he thought that 'd do.

'Aw think it will,' Jimmy says, lookin t' papper o'er. 'It seems

yo'n greight reliance in me, an' thinken me honest, intelligent, punctual, obligin, an' perfect maisther o' mi job. Oh, ah! this should do.'

'Does it say o that, lad?' Spanker axed him, lookin at th' papper again, rayther curious. 'Dal it! aw didn't know aw'd a chap on t' greaund as good as that. What the hangment am I seckin thee for!'

'Nay that's where aw'm fast.'

'Aw cawn't afford to loise a sarvant wi o thoose good qualities,' t' maisther said, rippin his testimonial up. 'Aw ne'er knew tha were so cliver afore. Come o' Monday mornin as usal, an' get on wi thi wark.'

'Well but, howd a bit!' Jimmy says, very solid. 'Aw shouldn't think o' takkin a shop at less nor two peaund a week wi a charicther like that, an' yo're nobbut payin me thirty shillin.'

'Come, aw'm done this time!' Spanker laughed. 'Aw s' be like to gi thee thirty-five neaw, aw reckon.'

'Thank yo,' Jimmy says. 'Its ta'en me a good while to get appreciated, but aw s' know i' futhur to get secked when aw want to mend mysel.'

Neaw, it's summat t' same road wi yo rhymin chaps, John. Yo're a long while i' gettin fund eaut, an' han to push yorsel forrad middlin afore yo con be fairly reckon't up."

"And how do you recommend me to push myself?"

"Aw con see nowt for it but deein, an' that gam isn't woth playin at."

John poo'd a bit o' papper eaut—he's olez his pockets full o' scraps ready to cob at folk—an' read up:

> "I have no visions of enduring fame,
> And care not that remote posterity
> Should make a treasure of my humble name,
> Give me, dead, the honour I would see
> While yet alive to bear it. Let me have
> In this our age sufficient room to sing,
> And when you lay me, friends, in the deep grave,
> Stir not my rest with idle murmuring.
> I fain would have a little circle now
> Of cordial hearts, to mark my simple note,
> And give a fitting meed of honest praise;
> Reserve your laurel for a worthier brow,
> Let me in bony dust forgotten rot,
> While other singers chant in other days."

"Well," aw said, "iv that's o tha wants t' job's done. There's olez tuthri folk to sympathise wi what a chap writes, an' as mony moore to co him a foo. Known or unknown t' merit o' thi wark's just t' same, an' iv thi books han owt good in 'em they'll find friends somewheere, whether tha yers abeaut it or not. That's o

Seckin, discharging.

th' fame 'at 's woth owt, too; for edithors nobbut run afther a chap when they con make brass by him, an' th' public i' general don't care twopence abeaut poets, wick or dyead. Keep on scrattin, lad!"

"You may depend upon my doing so. Whether at some time my works may burst upon an astonished public in full-blown stream, as the Aire springs from Malham Cliff, run deliberately away from the sea of popular favour, to reach it only after circuitous and aimless wanderings, like the Derwent, or dribble unnoticed into the river of literature, as the hundred rills of Craven fall into Swale and Wharfe, we must wait to discover, with such patience and philosophy as belong to us."

We went back into th' sittin reawm to smooke, rest us, an' play wi th' childher a bit, an' then John said iv aw felt willin we met walk as fur as Sowerby owd teawn, promisin to show me some good views an' intherestin seets.

III.

Aw towd him that were partly what aw'd com'n for, an' offer't to follow him onywheere, little thinkin what mak ov a job we had afore us. Iv aw'd had ony wit aw met ha known there'd be no stirrin in a counthry like that beaut climbin; but aw ne'er had no wit, an' were too blint to see what were comin. Aw gated findin eaut when we'd walked abeaut forty mile (as it looked) up an' deawn broos, but mostly up; an' stopped, pantin for wynt, lookin deawn th' long valley where th' railway, t' river Calder, Halifax road, an' th' canel were hutched together side bi side, wi hardly lond enough to keep 'em apart.

Owd Daniel De Foe crossed this valley a hundherd an' eighty year sin', an' this is what he says abeaut it. "The nearer we came to Halifax we found the houses thicker, and the villages greater in every bottom, and not only so, but the sides of the hills, which were very steep every way, were spread with houses. In short, after we had mounted the third hill we found the country one continued village, though every way mountainous, hardly a house standing out of a speaking distance from another; and as the day cleared up we could see at every house a tenter, and on almost every tenter a piece of cloth, or kersie, or shalloon, which are the three articles of this country's labour. These, by their whiteness, reflecting the bright rays of the sun that played upon them, formed, I thought, the most agreeable sight I ever saw; the hills rising and falling so thick, and the valleys opening so differently, that sometimes we could see two or three miles this way, sometimes as far another. Though we met few people without doors, yet within we saw the houses full of lusty fellows, some at the dye-fat, some at

the loom, others dressing the cloths; the women and children carding or spinning; all employed from the youngest to the oldest; scarce anything above four years old but its hands were sufficient for its own support. Not a beggar to be seen, not an idle person, except here and there in an almshouse, built for those that are ancient and past working. The people in general live long; they enjoy a good air, and under such circumstances hard labour is naturally attended with the double blessing both of health and riches."

Daniel doesn't tell us what made him lev sich a grand shop as that, but he did lev it for some rezon or another. There's a cadger or two up th' valley neaw, but aw've ne'er sin four year owd babbies wortchin to keep theirsel.

"Nay, John!" aw said, when aw'd partly getten mi wynt again; "aw didn't sarve thee eaut this road when tha coome a seein me. It's noane fair; an' me fast gettin an owd chap."

"I can't help it; the country is in fault. You have no such hills as these near Rochdale."

"Nowe; an' we don't want 'em noather. Aw con feel neaw for that counthryman o' thine 'at 'd to climb a big hill to his wark every mornin. 'Aw undherston,' he said to a mate once, wipin sweat off his yead, 'at this lumpy cut ov a world were mixed, carded, spun, an' wovven i' six days. Iv it 'd bin me aw'd a ta'en a fortnit, an' put a level face on t' cloth.' What lies o'er yon shockin steep broo across theere?"

"Halifax. Come, we have the worst over now. See yonder is Sowerby old church in full sight."

"Ah! is yon it? T' folk 'at built that had a fancy for bein hee up, shuz who they were. It doesn't look a very owd shop, yon."

"No. An old church stood on the same site before this one. With what majesty it stands there, commanding Calder vale! The architect who chose this lofty perch for his building must have had a fine eye for effect."

"He cared very little for th' cost o' cartin. But there's summat grand abeaut it, aw mun say. We'll thry to crawl up to th' top an' have a gradely look."

We went on past farm an' meadow (for these hills are cultivated to th' very top), petches o' garden greaund, cottages o' th' owd seldom-fund pattheran, tuthri ancient ho's where once hawks flew an' swords flashed, risin olez, whol we coome into Sowerby teawn an' went back to th' Civil War time at a jump. There's little fancy needed i' Sowerby sthreets to see Rupert an' Cromwell, King Charley an' Praisegod Barfoot, wi their gangs o' silk singlets an' leather jerkins, chargin up an deawn th' broo-sides, lettin off their saucer-meauthed pop-guns, or havin a desperate set-to reaund th' church gates to sattle who mun get howd o' th' horses stabl't

inside. These are th' very windows wheere freeten't creawds o' short-frocked, bare-armed women peeped through at th' dyeadly business eautside, skrikin an' ditherin as th' shiftin gam went first to one side, then to t'other. Generations o' lusty yeomen han bin bred here, an' scores o' bonny reet-hearted English lasses, livin simple lives on this wild hill, like young eagles in a neest, as happy as kings an' queens wi their palaces an' gangs o' slavverin lackeys.

Th' owd teawn's here yet, little awther't, an' there's pratty lasses beside, but where are thoose yeomen neaw? These chaps gardenin among th' graves are little like 'em. They're pale, reaunt-backed, thin i' flank an' shank, up to nought, no road.

"Cotton again," aw whisper't to John, an' he nodded.

"Fine day, maisther," aw said to one o' th' gardeners.

"Fine deigh, very," he says, lookin up, an' stoppin his threawel a minute.

"What mak o' artchitecthur done yo co this church o' yors? It looks raythor like a jail toard th' top wi thoose little square-quarrelled windows an' th' battlement. It's a quare un!"

"It's hard to seigh what style it's efther," says th' gardener. "There wor a gentleman here one deigh talked abaat mixed Italian an' sooa, but it were nowt to me."

"Done yo wortch i' th' cotton?"

"Ah do. Ah'm a wayver daan to t' Bridge."

"Aw'm another o' th' same breed deawn bi a Lancashire bridge. Shake honds brother cop-seauker! We'n gien o'er foin eaut abeaut th' colour o' roses neaw, but iv we con chet one another i' th' cattle or cotton markets we will do."

"That's reight!" he said, laughin. "Ye're a straight-gooin man, ah'll paand it!"

"Well, aw hope yo're reet. Han yo somebry akin buried here?"

"Mi youngest lad, onnly. T' last beighby. We leighd him daan here three month come Sunda."

"Han yo mony ov a family?"

"Seven living, lads an' lasses. But we could ill spare t' beighby, ye knaw?"

"Childher are ill spared at ony time; but iv they *mun* goo it's betther young nor owd. Tha wain't ha th' agony o' seein him dee afther he's groon into a young chap, and groon so into thi heart 'at it's like rivin body fro soul to loise him. That punishment's fo'n upo me once, an' aw ne'er want to yer ov onybody else sufferin t' same road."

"Sheighk hands, friend," th' gardener said; "an' if ye'll stop for a cup o' tea wi us ye're both welcome."

"Be careful," John laughed. "We may not be deserving characters."

"Ah'll chance that!" says th' Yokshireman. "Look through t' church an' then come hooam wi me. Yo'll be welcome as flaars i' Meigh."

But John begged off, sayin his wife expected us back to eaur baggins, so we left th' hospitable gardener an' walked through t' graveyard, lookin weel abeaut us. Heaw long they'n bin plantin folk theere aw don't know, but we fund one stone dated 1683, laid o'er "John Dearden, gentleman, of Wood Lane," an' another put deawn i' 1679 o'er Jos. de Sourbie, armiger.

There's a lot o' gravestone poethry lyin abeaut, most on it ov a common sort. Tuthri o' th' verses han bin used o'er an' o'er again, makin one fancy th' owd stonecutthers mun ha kept samples by 'em same as printhers done neawadays, an' when customers coome axed 'em iv they'd have "Affliction sore," "Weep not for me," or "This lovely bud," carved undher th' inscriptions. This is on a stone on t' north side:

> "While pity prompts the rising sigh
> Within each tender breast,
> O may this truth, I too must die,
> Most deeply be impressed."

A bit fur on there's these verses o'er th' grave o' Tabitha Whiteley, deed February 7th, 1833:

> "A loving wife, a tender parent dear,
> Who lived to God in holiness and fear;
> To peace, goodwill, to all mankind a friend,
> Her death tho' sudden yet in joy did end.
> She loved her children fondly and in truth,
> But near was Thomas, born to her in youth,
> Who in return lov'd her—this tribute paid,
> His own expense, to her dear memory laid."

"I feel more respect for Thomas's grief than his grammar," John said when he'd spelt it eaut. "There is more feeling in the lines than in many more artistic pieces though."

"It's very tidy, aw think. There's nowt to grumble at. Aw should ha liked it betther beaut that bit o' brag abeaut his own expense, but it's a matther o' taste. Sithee! Honest Tom's put his name at th' bottom, 'Thomas Whiteley, owner,' to make sure nobody 'll walk off wi his stone in a mistake."

But as we looked fur we fund that fashion very common, an' thought no moore on it.

We'd walked reaund th' church fro reaunt east end to square west teawer, admirin th' fine bottom row o' windows, wi orniments like bits o' stairs hondrails cut into th' woles undher 'em, when it sthruck me o at once there were no durs to th' buildin. Aw seed a sort ov a cubbort at th' teawer-foot, where th' sexton kept his spades an' tackle, but nowt else beside woles an' windows. Heawever, when aw were beginnin to wondher iv we should ha to climb

a laddher an' get through t' slate, John oppen't a little dur at th' seauth-west corner, just for o th' world like a common heause dur, an' we geet into a sort ov enthrance lobby, an' then through double durs into th' church.

A young chap were busy weshin a marble statue i' th' nook, wi a young woman to help him, but beside them we'd th' place to eaursel. It's a grand church ! Yo feel hushed an' serious, an' talk i' whispers, as yo look toard th' east, catchin th' full width an' height o' th' buildin. Fourteen big columns, seven on a side, rise majestic to th' hee top, howdin it up middlin safe, an' helpin to carry a gallery 'at runs reaund three sides. Th' chancel's dome-topped, finishin t' sthraight wole-lines off in a welcome curve, an' blazes wi a wondherful stained window, showin Christ crucified, wi priests, women, an' sodiers, creawdin reaund. For that matther there's fine painted glass in o' th' windows, an' th' sunleet creeps cool and dim through it, lying abeaut on pews an' floor like bits o' brokken-up rainbows. O th' place is decked eaut wi veined an' tinted marble ; sthrips on it run up th' aisles, th' pulpit's inlaid wi it, a dwarf wole between chancel an' nave 's solid marble, an' i' th' chancel itsel there's pillars an' slips o' th' same honsome stuff.

What are yon two shot-ripped, faded banners hangin at th' west end ? Here's a marble slab on t' north wole to tell us. It's set theere bi public subscription, "To the memory of those brave men from the township of Sowerby who laid down their lives at Sebastopol, Alma, Balaclava, and Inkerman."

Opposite to it there's another, put up i' honour o' no common mon iv th' writin tells thrue. "To the memory of Robert Johnston Stansfield, of Field House, late Captain in Her Majesty's Service. He served with distinction in the Crimean War and through the Indian Mutiny. A brave soldier, true and loyal, gentle, patient, full of faith and full of charity.

> ' The eternal God is thy refuge,
> and underneath are the
> everlasting arms.'"

John began rootin in his pockets, pooin bits o papper fro o sorts o' corners. In a bit he fund what he wanted, oppen't it eaut, an' read me these rhymes very soft an' solemn.

THE SOLDIER.

The billow streams about us here,
No coming foe we dread,
While the bold tar his part can bear
Upon the wave ;
But when afar our standard flies,
There, in his coat of red,
The soldier burns, and dares, and dies,
His land to save.

Look we upon our quiet plains,
The soldier lies below ;
Our vales are steeped with sacred stains
That cannot fade ;
His bones are burnt in torrid sands,
Congealed in northern snow ;
On mountain peaks, in desert lands,
His grave is made.

See monument and column reared
To warriors of old,
Who made our island valour feared
By countless hordes ;
Have we not more inherited
From hearts so staunch and bold,
Than tombs and trinkets of the dead,
And rusting swords?

Fear not, strong souls, to meet the death,
Your glorious trade may bring !
This mortal frame must lose its breath,
And turn to clay ;
But while men live this side the grave
Your deeds they'll speak and sing,
And hold the memory of the brave
Till the last day.

Yet soon the widening stream of peace
Shall quench the fires of war,
And man his brother man release
From bonds of hate ;
Grind up the metal of your guns,
O nations near and far !
Forge ploughs and hammers for your sons
And you'll be great !

Aw were a bit freeten't John ud be thinkin o' thryin th' orgin next, for mi wynt were nearly gwone wi climbin. Heawever, he mutther't summat abeaut t' thing bein too little an' badly chawked up wi dust, so aw geet off th' blowin business that time reaund, sayin aw quite agreed wi him an' car't nowt abeaut orgins o' less nor a theausan spindles, an' noane so mich for them if they weren't dhriven bi styem peawer.

Bi this time t' young chap had finished rubbin his marble figure, an' were slattin it o'er wi potfuls o' wayther fro th' font. We fund it to be a likeness ov Archbishop Tillotson, born somewheere near, it seems. Th' owd brid looked quite breet an' shinin afther his bath ; ready again for one o' th' long religious argeyments he used to be so fond on ; but he'll argey no moore, look as he will.

Aw were crackin a bit ov a joke wi th' young chap abeaut th' Archbishop wantin his collar weshin so long afther he're buried, when aw yerd th' poet start sniffin an' coughin at mi elbow, an' turn't reaund to catch him wipin his e'en.

"Aw've bin expectin this, John," aw said. "We'n ne'er com'n eaut together yet but tha's had to yeawl at summat. What's to do?"

He said nowt, but pointed to a long inscription near us, copied deawn here word for word :—

To the honoured memory of

the Family of Stansfield of Sowerby, particularly of the branch thereof resident at Field House, some of whose remains were removed from the site of the old church and deposited in a vault under this new church;

AND ABOVE ALL

To the revered memory of his most loving and beloved wife, MARY, daughter of Mr. James Lord, of Todmorden, who died on the 25th day of February, and was buried in the family vault on the 5th day of March, 1799.

GEORGE STANSFIELD, ESQ.,

her most afflicted husband, has placed this inscription in testimony of his gratitude to her, and of his most tender and affectionate love for her.

Possessed of all female excellencies, she employed them diligently in the well-ordering of her family, in acts of Charity to the Poor, and in making her dear Husband one of the happiest men upon earth. During a severe illness of three months, convinced of her approaching dissolution, she was thoroughly prepared for it and perfectly resigned. Her only thoughts about this world were her cares for the happiness of her dear husband during the Remainder of his Days. Upon this mournful subject she gave him Counsel with Composure, whilst he listened with Sorrow and Amazement, and when at the last she desired him to be buried in the same grave with her, he, overwhelmed with Grief, made her that Promise, and will order it to be strictly fulfilled, and he hopes through the mercies of his Creator and Redeemer to have the blessing of being united with her in the Mansions of Everlasting Happiness.

IV.

We walked quietly away fro that spot, made sacred bi so mich love an' sorrow, turnin deawn a lone 'at ran across th' hilltop an' comin very soon to a greight heause, long, low, pieced together at different times, belongin like o t' neighbourhood to th' parliament wartime, wantin nowt but tuthri paycocks an' a knot o' silk-donned cavaliers on th' graseplot to make everything complete.

"Field House," says John.

Aw nodded, an' beaut another word we walked deawn th' hill into a little village, where my mate, shappin as iv he knew his road abeaut, made for a heause wi a sign up, "Triangle Inn." Aw didn't like to see him gooin toard aleheauses i' that style, but said nowt as aw were sthrange; so he took me into a reawm where they keepen a piano stoo four foot long, co'd for summat to sup, an' we sattl't deawn for hawve-an-heaur. Th' lonlort towd us that used

to be a busy postin heause once ov a day, usin a whol row o' cottages for stablin, an' olez keepin somebry eaut o' bed. They're noane bother't wi mich o' that sort neaw, aw should judge.

There were two natives chattherin a curious mixup ov hashed English 'at onswers for dialect i' these parts, wi a dyel ov "Ea for sewer," "rooad," "baan," "peigh" an "weigh" abeaut it. One on 'em axed us iv we'd com'n deawn th' Steep Loine, an aw thought iv we hadn't it were a pity, afther o th' steep lones we'd climb't an' slurred deawn that day; but we could noather on us tell him.

Then we went to Sowerby Bridge, John maundherin o t' road abeaut th' times when coaches rowl't thick through that quiet counthry, speculatin on th' changes fro th' folk 'at rode in 'em to modhern railway thravellers; but when aw mention't th' piano stoo he'd ne'er so mich as sin it. That shows what these poets are.

Sowerby Bridge is a miserable slutchy hole, wur nor Rachda. We hadn't long to wait, bi good luck, afore they slurred us off past Luddenden Foot—a dyel betther known us "T' Fooit"—back to Mytholmroyd, where we spent a very sociable neet awom, tellin John's missis o we'd sin an' yerd. Hoo kept botherin me to read some Lancashire dialect to her, reckonin hoo'd be sure to like an' undherston it iv aw would; so aw were like to do as hoo wanted, givin her fair warnin first what a fine elocutionist aw were. They kept theirsel very quiet whol aw stutted through these rhymes.

DEATH AN' T' PHILOSOPHER.

There were a greight philosopher,
'At scribbl't, read, an' thought;
He'd potther't reaund for seventy year
Beaut ever ailin aught;

For he'd ne'er ta'en a gill too mich,
Nor smooked, nor stopped eaut lat,
Nor danced, nor played at whist an' sich
Time-shortenin gams as that.

He'd never wortched hissel too hard,
His honds he'd ne'er to deet,
He thrimmed his byert to hawve a yard,
An' olez weshed his feet.

So when his wynt began to fail
He thought it middlin sthrange;
He'd swum so long wi steady sail
'At he'd ne'er looked for change.

But when he fund hissel i' bed,
Sthretched helpless on his back,
T' thought crept into his fawse owd yead
He're on another tack.

Slurred, slid. *Deet*, to make dirty.

"And yet," he says, "there surely must
Be some mistake in this;
'Twill never do to lose i' th' dust
A man whom all will miss.

It seems to me that I was planned
For special work below;
And really I've too much on hand
To die and leave things so."

He yerd a chuckle fro th' bed-foot,
An' seed a shadowy lump,
Donned up i' clooas black as soot,
Meaunt th' hond-rail wi a jump.

Cross-legged it pyerch't afore his e'en,
Pantin wi labourin breath,
An' coughin said, "Aw'm here, yo seen;
Get ready—aw'm owd Dyeath."

"Nay, nay!" t' philosopher made shift
To whisper, fleyed some ill;
"You're but a shadow, with no gift
To summon or to kill.

No man in reason could expect
To hear Death's dreaded tongue
Talking the Rochdale dialect;
Come, come, good ghost! you're wrong."

"Dost say so?" th' shade axed wi a wink,
"Tha'rt talkin middlin bowd,
But aw should know mysel, aw think,
For o aw'm gettin owd.

O dialects an' tongues aw talk,
Beaut stuttin, plain an' clear;
Shuz wheere aw goo aw copy t' folk
'At's used to livin theere.

Tha'd soon ha' grumbl't iv aw'd set
Agate i' hawve-breek Dutch,
Black-leaded French, or—what's wur yet—
Chinese an' sichlike slutch.

Aw'm th' same owd mowin chap 'at stood
Shivin at human grase,
I' wayther-sodden swathe, when t' Flood
Weshed th' world it dirty face.

It's me 'at sattl't th' lords o' Rome,
Wi mony a ancient chief,
Beaut fuss; but neaw shuz when aw come
Folk skriken past belief.

Aw shifted Wellinton an' Co.,
Owd Nelson an' that crew;
An' it's bother't me sin' then, aw know,
To get enough to do.

Aw sided Nap, a felleyin thing
Noane mich o'er five foot hee;
Aw miss him, too, for whol on th' fling
He made some wark for me.

Aw'd mony a bit ov o'ertime then,
An' tuthri nawpins made;
But neaw for jobs aw've oft to sken
Through t' fo'in-off i' thrade."

Some weel t' philosopher could tell
'At th' ghost were o it said,
An' yet he couldn't think hissel
So near to bein dyead.

"Good Death," he says, "some error lies
About this sudden call;
To leave the world as you advise
Would never do at all.

Reflect upon my many schemes
To benefit the race;
They never can be more than dreams
Unless I live a space."

"Heaw mich is that?" axed Dyeath; "heaw long
Dost think thi plans 'll tak?"
An' wi a grin his legs he swung,
Shiftin to yez his back.

"Some twenty years, perhaps, or so,
If matters go all right;
One thing with certainty we know—
I can't be spared to-night."

"Th' owd tale!" said th' shadow, grinnin wide;
"An' yet aw didn't look
For this fro thee, becose tha's thried,
Wi mony a speech and book,

To show folk what poor things they are,
Heaw little missed they'll be;
An' towd 'em 'at it's betther far
Nor sufferin wick to dee."

"That's true enough, but yet I feel
Some difference is here;
Death surely all our griefs should heal,
But he may come too near.

Somehow my maxims don't apply
To such a case as this."
"Nowe!" Dyeath said, "an' aw'll tell thee why;
Tha'rt fleyed—that's wheere it is.

For o tha's gawped o'er th' grave so long,
Squintin at th' world behinnd;
For o tha's studied deep an' shtrong,
An' th' back o' Knowledge skinned;

For o tha's lived full seventy year
Beaut pain o' limb or heart,
Thinkin tha'rt a philosopher
An' moore nor common smart;

There's lots o' folk at ne'er could read
Nor think woth co'in owt,
Wi hawe this gruntin would ha' deed,
Levin me loase to bowt.

Aw've tuthri jobs toard Asia yet;
Aw's ha to stir mi feet;
It sthrikes me 'at aw'm beaun to sweat
Afore aw've done for th' neet.

So get thee ready, let's be off,
Or betther wark aw 's miss;
An' Rachda never shuits mi cough—
It's a cowd hole is this!"

"Go, gentle shade; I'll gladly stay
For future calls from thee."
"Aw've cobbed too mich good time away,"
Says Dyeath, "come on wi me.

Just sattle deawn—tha'll ne'er be missed;
There's a foot-race to-morn;
Thi pappers 'll be ta'en fro th' kist
An' brunt, as sure's tha'rt born.

Tha's noather friend nor nowt akin
To yeawl o'er th' coffin lid;
There's nobry livin cares a pin
For owt tha ever did.

Tha's shut thisel fro th' world away,
Dhremin o' things to come,
Missin good chances every day
O' doin good to some.

Tha'rt fawse enough, but larnin hee
Ne'er counts on th' grave's sharp brink;
Aw've sattl't betther folk nor thee,
An' shall again, aw think."

Th' philosopher began to shake
Whol sweat rowl't off his yead;
"Say what you will there's some mistake;
'Tis hard to die!" he said.

"Tha'rt wrong again," says Dyeath; "tha'll see
It's yezzy wark enough;
Through practice it's no moore to me
Nor turnin gas-taps off."

Then eaut he sthretched his fingers cowd,
An' t' little job were done;
I' hawve a crack bwoth him an' th' owd
Philosopher were gwone.

"Thank you, very much," John's wife said; th' usal parrot talk, myenin owt or nowt. John hissel looked onywheere between six an' twelve, oather fain or skain, just as aw liked to tak it. Aw felt mad enough to set *him* off recitin, eaut o' vengeance, but spared him as he's nobbut young. We sattl't to have a look reaund t'other side o' th' valley next day, an' afore so long shapped off to bed, where aw fell asleep wi th' moor-sweepin wynt rushin deawn reaund us fro Soyland tops, an' th' Elfin brook singin i' mi ears.

V.

Next mornin aw woke eaut ov a dhrem abeaut bein catched in a cardin engine; an' no wondher, for th' little twin lasses, lookin some pratty i' their white neet-geawns, were pyercht on th' bed rivin at mi toppin an' whiskers, one on ayther side. Aw stopped that gam middlin sharp, rowlin 'em o'er among th' clooas whol they reaused o th' heause up wi their sheauts o' laughin. When th' breakfast were o'er aw took th' little dots eaut a bit, chirpin like linnets, showin me bridneests, favourite corners an' so on, an' then John an' me shapped for business again.

He took me through t' village, across th' Calder, an' set off full speed toard Hebden Bridge.

"Heaw mony mile to-day?" aw said, thinkin it as weel to have a gradely undherstondin wi sich a reckless walker as he were showin hissel to be.

"Just as many as you please," he says. "I want to take you through the Hebden valley, past Hardcastle rocks, and once there the world is all before us. We can go forward along the valley to Colne, or stop at Widdup to climb Boulsworth hill, turning off there to Holme, Burnley, Haworth, Keighley, or Halifax; or we can return over the heights of Heptonstall, if your wind will carry you up the ascent. If not we can wander ignominiously back over our own footsteps to the point we started from."

"Tha seems to have it o off, lad. Heaw will it be to slutther up as fur as Hardcastle an' then sattle what's to be t' next?"

He thought that 'd be as good a plan as ony, so we poted away deawn th' hee road, through Hebden Bridge (where th' new teawn's terraced up a hillside, wi gowd laburnum tassels, rhodydendhrons, an' red an' white blossomed thorn showin again th' grey stone walls), into th' valley road, an' so deawn onto th' little Hebden bonks, wi th' greight steep ov Heptonstall teawerin to th' sky above us, creawned wi th' hondful o' stone buildins an' th' honsome church, keepin steady watch o'er miles o' t' low counthry reaund abeaut. We'd getten into fairylond this time, an' no bother abeaut it. That brode windin valley looked to run on for miles afore us,

To pote, to point or push at with the toe, to walk.

HEBDEN BRIDGE.

cover't up it steep hee sides wi close-hutched shafts o' timber, every one topped bi spreadin curly ringlets o' pale and dark green, red gowd, or silver white. Oak an' willow, fir an' beech, aldher an' ash, o cuddl't toard one another, a happy family, mixin their delicate colours i' thremblin sheets o' glistenin beauty; theausands o' fither't singers swung on t' thick-crommed branches, turnin eaut sich exercises i' harmony as were ne'er yerd at th' musical colleges, keepin time to th' rockin wynt; an' th' little river prattl't away deawn i' th' bottom, lendin a last touch, as it sparkl't undher t' mornin sun, to th' comeliness o' that rare spot o' greaund.

John seed aw were suppin deep o' satisfaction, an' started thryin to plague me. "We are too early in the season," he said; "or, to be more correct, the season is late. Delightful as the place is now it is but as the first sketch to the finished picture in comparison with what I have seen it. When the undergrowth is matured, when the heather sweeps in purple sheets along the hillsides, when the banks are thick with honeysuckle, saxifrage, anemone, harebell, sanicle, loosestrife, speedwell, and many a rarely tinted flower, then you would indeed think it a spot of celestial fashion, and unbend your spirit in ecstacy."

"It's good enough for me, neaw," aw towd him. "Tha may teem colour an' scent reaund abeaut as tha's a mind, deck th' eautline or fill up thi foregreaund as tha will. It's good enough as it is."

We stopped a bit to look back toard th' teawn, wondherin iv so mony heauses were built four story hee becose folk theere are so used to hill-climbin 'at they cawn't sleep beaut gooin a good way up to bed. As we stood, a dyel o' picnicers began getherin abeaut us, mostly wortchin folk bi their looks, but o clen-weshed, weel-donned an' cheerful. They'd o little baskets o' summat t' eight wi 'em, an' aw seed a bottle neck stickin eaut here an' theere, or thought aw did. Knots o' childher ran up an' deawn th' green bankin, an' flutther't away bi th' brook side, colourin o th' view wi their red an' yollow ribbins.

It fair made me hutch! "John, lad!" aw brasted eaut, "iv these Sethurday holidays arn't summat to be thankful for aw should like to know what is! To look at these creawds o' folk an' childher, gettin bwoth health an' pleasur i' this bonny nook, an' to think o' th' time when aw were young, gies me some glee. We thought nowt o' wortchin fifteen or sixteen heaurs a day then, for little wage. There were no hawve holidays, no chep thrips, no fine clooas, no brass to spare, then, for common folk. Sithee at 'em neaw! They'n o dhropped care into th' Calder as they coome o'er it (neaw I bethink me, that's happen what makes t' river so black), an' there'll be nowt but leet hearts an' nimble feet deawn i' this paradise, tha'll see!"

"But I have heard these holidays objected to, on moral grounds."

"Moral fiddlestick!" aw were startin, but a sheaut stopped me. "Neaw, owd pottato!" a rough fley-babby sort ov a voice co'd eaut, an', turnin, aw seed a wagonette full o' Rachda chaps an' women, wi Ben Simpson, a neighbour o' mine, stonnin up waggin his arm at me.

Aw waved mi cap an' smil't at 'em as they passed, mony a friendly face shinin back.

"It *is* him, bi gum!" Ben co'd eaut when he seed mi face. "Wheere next? Howd on, dhriver! Stop thi menagerie a minute, an' let me ger eaut. Aw'll walk deawn to th' brig an' catch yo up in a bit."

He coome up to us, so we wagged neighves an' walked forrad afther t' carriage.

"Aw thought it mut be thee when aw seed thee liverin a sarmon eaut to thi mate," Ben says. "Aw yerd last neet tha were off somewheere, but aw ne'er lippen't on meetin wi thee this road."

"An' heaw are they o i' th' fowt? It looks a good while sin' aw left 'em."

"They're o as reet as bobbins."

"Tha doesn't seaund reet thysel. Hasta getten a sore throat, or what?"

"Ah! it's this in-flew-hen-so 'at's bin botherin me, an' i' flyin eaut again so it left tuthri fithers stickin. Aw'm nobbut a bit roopy. Who's thi mate?"

"He's a poet, so tak a good look at him."

John laughed, but he colour't up a bit, an' fidgeted undher his thin skin.

"Aw see nowt amiss wi him," Ben says when he'd looked. "What's a poet?"

"A chap 'at's foo enough to tell o he thinks, for other folk to laugh at."

"Oh! that's it? Aw thought it met happen be some new preparation for throstle frames—there's like so mony maks o' new things comin eaut."

"Nay; throstles are poets ready made. Co him John, an 'it'll be reet."

"Well, reet's reet an' raght's raght, said Isaac o' Tum's, when they fined him hawve-a-creawn damage an' fifteen shillin costs. Aw guess there's o maks o' folk i' Yokshire."

"We have plenty of variety," John said. "You have perhaps heard the old rhyme,

> 'Birstal for ringers,
> Heckmondwike for singers,
> Dewsbury for peddlers,
> Cleckheaton for sheddlers.'"

Lippen't, expected.

"Not aw, lad! Aw ne'er knew no rhymes, nobbut 'Betty Wood's com'n back,' or 'Up yon laddher, deawn yon hole,' an' sich like. Aw were olez too mich ov a battherlash for that job. Eh! what a grand shop this is! It's makin me feel as pyert as a bullspink, an' as leet i' th' anclif as a gruand! Iv we could blange this an' Cronkeyshay together, owd brid, there'd be betther seets i' Rachda."

"Tha'rt reet, Ben. We were talkin when tha coome up abeaut this holiday business, 'at gies us a chance o' comin here eaut o' th' smooke. What dost think abeaut it?"

"Think abeaut it?" Ben axed, starin wi his meauth wide oppen.

"Ah! Some folk thinkèn it's wrong, tha knows."

"What mak o' craythers are they?" Ben grunted in his hoarse voice, stoppin a minute, an' howdin up his shut reet neighve ready to dhrop into th' lift. "What mak o' lennock faffnecutes an' ricklin bandyhewits are they? Tell me some sthrong words, Weighver; aw've noane 'at con do justice to sich heighvy-keighvy pickhawms!" Deawn coome his neighve.

"Tha'rt noane doin amiss for that," aw towd him. "Get on wi thi tale; but talk betther English iv tha wants John to make sense on 't."

"Why, where has t' lad bin brought up ever? What! When we'n bin their beetneeds for generations, fayther afther son, wi noather rest nor nawpins, yerin 'em hanch an' arre at us bi way o' thanks, oyned an' harrished whol life were a ruebargain, an' a poor mon wanted his jobberknow weel lythin to ston it ov ony shap, are they for turnin on us again, bokin their fingers an bulshin their chops at us, thryin to clart us o'er wi wark whol we're fair clagged fast like flees in a sow-box? Tell me that?" An' deawn coome his neighve wi a leaud clap.

"Hear, hear!" aw said.

"I quite agree with your sentiments," John says, "but your meaning is completely beyond me."

"Talk English, Ben," aw said. "Tha'rt twenty year too fur back."

"Nay, indeed aw, noather!" Howd thi din an' hearken! Aw've had to punce one chap to-day, an' don't want to feight again iv it con be helped."

"What have you been fighting about," John axed, grinnin. "You are as mordacious as this other Lancastrian, I can hear."

"What's that tha'rt co'in me? It were nobbut a chap 'at coome botherin as we started i' th' carryvan this mornin. He

Anclif, ankle. *Gruand*, greyhound. *Blange*, blend.
Faffnecutes, hypocrites. *Bandyhewits*, small crooked-legged dogs.
Heighvy-keighvy, unsteady. *Pickhawms*, the handle of a pick or hammer.
Beetneeds, helpers in emergencies.
Jobberknow, the head. *Bokin*, pointing. *Bulshin*, bulging.
Clart, to scatter dirt, to smear.

says, 'Ben, had aw betther slip reaund bi th' Teawn Ho when yo're gwone?' Aw axed him what for, an' he says 'Well, t' policemen met as weel have hawve a day as there's so mony spinners gooin eaut o' th' teawn.' So aw punced him, an' doubl't him up like o smith's bermskin."

"It's to be hoped he's noane kilt?"

"He made too mich noise for a dyead un, aw think. Neaw, abeaut these folk we were talkin o'er when yo put yor motties in beaut laithin," an' up went his neighve again. "Iv there's ony on 'em yet 'at grudgen hard-wortchin craythers their bit o' Sethurday they desarven to have a taugh clooas line halshed reaund their throttles, an' be rovven up to a saplin branch; or to get a good weltin wi a stanchel. Iv that wouldn't act aw'd 'tice 'em to th' cut side, baz 'em in, an' keep 'em soakin theere whol they crimbl't. That'd sarve t' britchel papper-bags reet, wouldn't it?" Deawn went his neighve.

John said, "These punishments sound so awful that I should hesitate to condemn any fellow-creature to such a fate. Be more merciful."

"Tha mun alleaw 'at young folk run wild an' getten into mischief wi havin too mich time o' their honds," aw said.

"Aw'll alleaw nought o' th' sort!" Ben co'd eaut. "What the hangment! There's olez time fund for mischief, isn't there? Are o th' desarvin folk, same as us, to be grund deawn becose there's tuthri divleskins i' th' world? It's noane woth talkin abeaut, becose we'n getten th' halidays an' he'd be a bowd chap 'at meddl't wi us, but iv tha wants to argey aw'll argey—Sethurdays, weshin or wortchin days, Boxharry or Wakes week, Fag Pie to Bowlegged Sunday, or ony time 'at 's hondylike; so will that do for thee?"

"Ah! that sattles th' job. Th'art too far larn't for us to have ony chance, so we'll dhrop it."

We walked on past a facthry stonnin bi th' river edge, an' sthruck deeper into th' still woods, soon loisin seet ov every sign o' mon's wark. Th' owd sun pept at us through t' clustherin branches, dapplin us wi brokken gowd; th' childher's sweet voices set o th' valley ringin, an' sent deein echoes up th' hill sides; owdher folk wandhered quietly under t' green shade, hearkenin to th' singin wayther; e'en glisten't breet, tongues hung loase, hearts were dancin, everybody felt gradely wick.

Bermskin, leather apron. *Motties*, mottoes, muttered talk.
Laithin, inviting. *Halshed*, noosed or looped.
Stanchel, iron bar or stanchion. *Britchel*, brittle.
Boxharry week, the blank week between pay-weeks, when the workmen lived on credit or starved.
Bowlegged Sunday, a corruption of *Bowl-egg Sunday;* Easter Sunday, when hard-boiled *eggs* are *bowled* in the fields for amusement.
Fag pie, a pie of figs; a simnel.

"These railways han made some awtheration sin' we were lads, owd mon," Ben said.

"They han so!"

"Aw remember walkin here fro Rachda once, thirty year sin'. That were a job! Aw'm fast heaw we geet back, but we shapped it some road bi thrampin o' neet."

"It's too fur for walkers like us."

"Oh, ah! but aw were young then, an' as full o' gam as a pindeawler. T' first time aw seed a railway thrain aw ran wom yeawlin an' towd mi mother aw'd sin Owd Nick bowtin off wi a row o' cottages."

"Ger off!" aw said, an' John brasted eaut laughin.

"It's reet, aw tell thee. Hello! there's my mates planted yon, sithee, an' t' missis lookin for me. Yo'll be gooin forrad, belike?"

"We will go on to the Crags," John said; "then we had better go round by Heptonstall, as a short cut back."

"What, up theere?" Ben axed, pointin to th' greight hill behinnd us.

John nodded; Ben whistl't an' looked at me; aw wagged mi yead.

"Isn't there wayther enough i' th' brook for yo?" Ben says.

"What do you mean by that?" John axed, laughin.

"What do aw myen! Why, iv yo're weary o' life dhreawnin's as chep a shuttance as ony. That's what aw myen. Weighver, iv tha gets up that meauntain tha'll ne'er come deawn again. Yo'd best tak a poor chap's advice, come an' have a bit o' dinner wi us, an' larn fro this runnin wayther to keep deawn i' th' bottom."

"Nonsense! The climb will do us good, and give us an appetite. You had better come up with us."

"Not iv aw know it! Aw admire yor pluck, as t' doffer said when two policemen ran him in, but aw s' ne'er see yo again. Good day to yo, maisther. So long, owd brid! Aw'll tell thi wife wheere tha were last sin."

"Do!" aw said. "An' get some linseed, or neats'-foot oil, or summat for that throat o' thine. Tha seaunds like a muzzl't tarrier worryin a rough edge o' moonleet."

"Howd off!" Ben says, grinnin. "We'n some red wusted for baggin-time, an' that's t' best ov owt aw know for shiftin a hawst."

"What does he mean by red worsted?" John axed, laughin, as Ben turn't off to wheere his party were pyerch't in a shady nook.

"What! hast ne'er yerd o' that afore? But aw'm forgettin tha'rt a foreigner. Red wusted's owd Jamaica; they're for havin what we co'n a rum-an'-tay baggin."

Pindeawler, the woman who falls in love with and courts a man is said to be his *pindowler*.
Hawst, cough.

VI.

We looked to be walkin neaw through a carefully planted an' weel-kept park, but we werenot. No gardeners had ever bin wanted to fill thoose slopes an' cliffs wi close-packed timber, smother o' t' bonks wi bluebells, an' rear sich sweeps an' bundles o' fithery fyern. Willows, wi their delicate ribbins, were mixed wi dark firs, just puttin eaut new shoots an' thimbles, an' young saplins showed their tendher tints again polished poplar levs an' climbin thrails ov ivy.

What a spot that is for threes! Big an' little, owd an' young, dark an' leet, o maks were theere, set as close together as cops in a skip, coverin every point th' e'e could rest on. O'eryead branches met, spreadin to reet an' lift thick an' threefowd; below us th' deep clough were fair chawked up wi sheets o' quiverin levs, huddin th' busy little river 'at we could yer singin away at it wark far underneighth; opposite, a straight-up wole o' rock sthretched away seeminly beaut end, crommed wi plants an' timber 'at shapped to find root-howd somewheere, but heaw we couldn't tell; afore us long lines o' stem an' branch oppen't eaut on th' hill, joined up to windin rows creepin on th' valley side, o on 'em getherin far away into one mazy swirl o' green fithers.

We coome to th' Crags at last—two big hillocks o' rock an' dirt stonnin in a glen shadowed bi tuthri tall fine owd threes, an' sit us deawn a bit to do Robin Hood an' Little John whol we'd a wood hondy. Then wi went forrad, findin th' valley wildher as we geet toard th' top end, but bonnier nor ever, an' poted away whol we yerd a cuckoo laughin at us, an' thought that seaunded as iv it were time to turn back. So far we'd bin walkin up t' north side, hee above th' wooded valley, but neaw we crossed t' wayther an' fund a road deawn i' th' bottom, where clustherin branches screened us an' we could see th' windin river, clear as glass, weshin past big reaunt boudhers, slippin o'er greight square flags, fo'in deawn self-worn back-lashes, sattlin i' breadths o' still wayther; olez busy chattherin, grumblin, laughin to itsel as it ran. We could see th' banks neaw—straight-cut cliffs o' solid rock, crommed wi plant an' three, an' risin forty or fifty feet on bwoth sides. Here an' theere little shoots o' wayther fo yead first deawn th' hee woles; undherfoot yo walk on velvet, for th' greaund's thick wi levs mouldherin theere for mony a score o' years. Th' air's cool an' still, an' there's no seaund yerd but what belongs bi reet to th' place. Yo con see th' sun glintin through t' livin curtain hee above, an' fancy it's warm eautside; but there's no danger o' sunsthroke here. There's nowt here to throuble onybody, an' aw catch mysel wondherin iv aw 's ever be sich a foo as to go back to Rachda. Fleawers peep at us as we pass, brids fly twittherin at arm's length,

THE LODGE, HEBDEN VALLEY (NEAR HARDCASTLE CRAGS).

a soft wind shakes t' three tops, an' gwoes whisperin saycrets o'er-yead in a long-dhrawn orgin note. Oh nowe! we con shift noane fro a shop like this to be bother't wi cops an' knockin-off rods. We'n knocked off for good, an' wark's dyead an' buried. Aw've no fancy for sturrin mi tent a yard nearer wom. Noane at o! For this is just t' feelin aw've olez looked forrad to catchin sin' aw were a little carless lad—this is peace, an' rest, an' liberty. Here's

"A bower rounded for us and a sleep."

Oh! Life, owd breek! slutther on an' say nowt! Let me a-be! Aw'll ne'er bother nobry no moore, nor shift a foot fro this brokken bit fo'n fro heaven—

"What are you dreaming about, old friend?" John axed, wakkenin me up wi a clap on th' back; so aw towd him aw felt like playin th' hermit, rootin abeaut for a cave an' stoppin theere for good. Heawever, he persuaded me to go back wi him for that once, so we sleauched forrad deawn th' clough an' sthruck up th' hillside toard Heptonstall, feelin rayther hungry, as scenery's poorish stuff to feed off.

What a hill that is! We'd getten it on th' yezzy side, as things happen't, an' crawl't up some road o i' one piece; but it's a broo an' no mistake! John reckons folk livin up theere an' wortchin i' Hebden Bridge gwone up an' deawn to their dinners every day. Th' hill's as steep as a coal-shoot on that side, but aw darsay he's reet. Folk 'at con live up theere t' year reaund con do owt very like—obbut dee. They'll ne'er do that whol t' last end.

We geet sich a view o' th' Hebden valley off th' top 'at we could do nowt but gasp an' gawp at it for a bit. When we'd done we made for th' ancient teawn an' wandher't o reaund it lookin for t' main sthreet. We didn't find one, but we let on a narrow twitch, summat like a loom alley set up o' one end, where th' chief hotels an' th' branch store were, an' that satisfied us. We didn't notice ony coffee-heauses or temperance shops near, so we crept quietly into th' Cross Inn, geet some ale, an' ordher't some dinner. We were waited on bi a sociable young chap, wi cheeks ov a deep wholsome red an' shanks as nimble as iv he'd bin brought up on t' threadmill; an' we fund afther at these cheeks an' shanks marked o th' sattlers on that bowd meauntain. Seein we were sthrange he talked to us a bit for company, gav us bits o' news abeaut th' place, an' showed us a squozzen cat, hard as brazzil an' flat as a fluke, 'at 'd bin fund i' th' owd church ruins.

They'd a little picther hangin up 'at took John's fancy, a cliver paintin ov an owd bare-yeaded chap leighnin forrad on a thick stick.

"That's a fine piece of work," he said. "Who painted it?"

Brazzil, a comparative term for hardness.

"Dr. Mitchell," t' young chap says. "It's a good likeness of old Bill Holt, a well-known Heptonstall man."

"He looks a long-yeaded owd cock," aw said. "What were he?"

"A horse dealer, carrier, and what-not; long-headed enough, as you would have found by trying to bargain with him. I have known old Bill more than once set off with a broken-winded nag worth a pound or thirty shillings, and come back with half-a-dozen colts and horses, and very likely a couple of sovereigns in his pocket besides. He was well known at all the fairs for miles round—you will find people in Rochdale and Bury who can remember him, I'll warrant. He never wore a hat."

"He'd happen a fancy for caps, then, like plenty moore sensible folk."

"No! neither hat nor cap would do for William. He wore nothing but that dusky shock of hair you see in the picture, though he often walked four or five score miles through all weathers. He never missed Brough Hill fair, for instance, a good eighty miles from here."

"But yo don't myen to say he walked o th' road?"

"Every yard of it, there and back. It used to be a five days' job for him."

"Heaw dost feel afther that, John?" aw axed th' poet. "Bank clerkin seaunds a yezzy thrade at t' side o' this."

"You are right. At least one original has sprung from this hill evidently."

"Oh, yes! original enough," th' young chap went on. "An attempt was once made up here to put the Church Acts into operation, compelling everybody to attend the Sunday services. Among others Bill was called upon."

"An' what then? He'd set off on t' thramp, happen?"

"Not at all. He went to church obediently enough."

"Well?" aw said, scentin a joke somewheere, for th' young fellah were grinnin o reaund his face.

"He was not troubled to go a second time. You see, the old man, by way of economising labour and helping his dinner forward, took a basket of potatoes under his arm, and worked steadily at peeling them through the whole service."

We geet a good dinner an' then turn't eaut to explore th' neighbourhood. It's t' quarest hole ever aw were in. We groped in an' eaut o' narrow, windin sthreets, between rickety stone heauses, mostly blint o' one e'e, propped up wi baulks an' stangs at th' gable ends, creawn't wi some o' th' wildest lookin chimblies ever sin eaut ov a neetmare, th' woles pointin every road obbut sthraight. Some o' th' rows looken as iv they'd bin set o in a line once ov a day, an' then every heause had turn't part reaund to see what were gooin on at t'other side—some turnin fur nor other-

HEPTONSTALL.

some, part on 'em twistin hawve road back again, some screwin their necks reaund, some swaggin at th' knees, an' so on. Aw ne'er seed sich a collection o' property! We began to feel mazy among sich unprincipled woles and slates, so we bowted off to th' churchyard whol we felt safe.

There's two churches i' that yard—a weel-fed church an' a skeleton. Th' first is a snug honsome buildin, consecrated i' 1854, big enough to howd o th' folk livin on th' hilltop, fitted up i' comfortable modhern style, an' likely to satisfy everybody; though it's raythher a pity they couldn't ha fund reawm for o th' twelve apostles in th' east window, astid o' levin two on 'em shiverin i' th' windy west.

Churches o' this sort are common, bwoth up hills an' deawn holes, but there's noane mony like th' starved-eaut deserted owd pile o' stone-wark stonnin near it. Nowe! We mun go back six hundherd year or moore to match that. It savvours sthrong o' th' Norman conquest. Even Oliver Cromwell's eaut o' this job; though he coome afther, to be sure, for it were a matther o' principle wi him to climb every broo he coome across an' dhrop tuthri cannon shot onto somebry's hencote.

Six hundherd year! These time-batther't woles, that cracked tottherin west teawer, han gwone through summat sin' they were first reared on their hee pyerch. Through these gapin window slits generations o' monkish e'en han looked; in these bare-ribbed aisles, oppen to th' sky, long processions han throdden wi chant an' incense—here, across these gravestones, we con see their very footmarks, where they'n worn th' deep-cut inscriptions away on one side, levin 'em plain to read on t'other. Bit-bats an' ulyets fly here neaw, an' th' stone floor, once carpeted wi rushes, lies green wi grase, ivy, an' getherin weed. Th' owd nave rears it crumblin arches yet; thransept an' chancel, sthripped to th' bwon, ston wi o their owd majesty. Con we read these chisell't stones we're walkin o'er? "Here resteth the boddey," says one. Well, spellin's nowt but a new-fangl't habit at best; th' owd Saxon below has slept no wur for that slip o' th' mason's tool. Another's dated 1613, a bit afore we coome preawlin into th' world, an' twenty year afore th' Plague swept deawn Calder Vale, killin off victims bi scores an' hundherds, an' shiftin whol families off this hill as th' gravestones show; an' here are three parsons laid weel to th' east, showin between 'em proof ov howdin this livin nearly a hundherd an' forty year.

"They rest quietly enough now," John said, moore to hissel nor me. "At peace they lie, and their works do follow them. Through all the dark years of England's captivity these walls have stood; they stand yet in the days of freedom. Can the coming six hundred years show such advances as the last?"

Ulyets, owlets.

"Aw'll give that puzzle up," aw said, as we walked quietly through t' graveyard. "We s' be noane here to see, an' there's no 'casion to bother abeaut it. Thoose meddlin Frenchmen met ha left us this bit ov a hillock, shuzheaw. They were like middlin sharpset for conquerin when they climb't up here."

We noticed 'at th' buryin-greaund were very close packed, as iv lond were scarce, an' looked reaund for gravestone verses beaut findin owt o' consequence—it's too windy for poethry up theere.

"Here lies a murdered man," John said, pointin to a stone near us. Aw turned an' read, "In memory of Samuel Sutcliffe, of Hebden Hay in Hepstonstall, who died February 7, 1817, aged eighty-one years."

"Murdhered!" aw co'd eaut. "An owd chap like him! He'd ha deed ov hissel afore so long iv they'd letten him a-be."

"He was murdered by Mike Pickles of Northwell, assisted by a weaver called John Greenwood, better known as Joan."

"A weighver! Nay, come! Be careful what tha says."

"A weaver, without doubt. Mike himself wove sometimes, but oftener turned his mind to gardening, dry-walling, bee-stealing, clandestine cow-milking, and other secret methods of making a living. He was left-handed, knock-kneed, and double-jointed; and was notoriously by far the strongest man in this neighbourhood, or anywhere near it. He was of a very religious turn, too; a member of Birchcliffe Chapel, and very fond of holding forth and arguing about the doctrines of the Christian faith. He often spent his evenings with old Sutcliffe, and the pair were supposed to be great friends."

"He'd some reet marks ov a villain abeaut him, that mon," aw said. "Let's sit us deawn a bit, an' then tha con tell me th' tale comfortably."

So we sit us deawn on a tombstone, an' John went on:—

"At midnight on the 6th of February, Pickles and Greenwood went to old Sutcliffe's cottage, broke into it, stole some money in silver and notes, some cloth pieces, warps, and other things. The old man woke with the noise they made, sat up in bed, and cried 'William! William! William!' three times, to rouse his next neighbour. The neighbour heard him call, but thought the sound was caused by the wind, which was blowing that night with fury. Mike Pickles grasped the old man's throat to stop his cries, and stopped them so effectually that Sutcliffe never stirred again. The thieves got clear with their booty, and for some days no clue could be found to them. Nevertheless they were discovered in due time, and in a simple but remarkable way, as you shall hear."

VII.

"Aw'll tell thee what it is, lad," aw said; "this is a bonny sort ov a tale tha'rt thryin to freeten me wi. It's sendin cowd ditherins o deawn mi back."

"I will warm your blood again by explaining how the murderers were caught and hanged. You must understand that Joan Greenwood was a man of very small intellect——"

"What, a gawmless weighver! Nay; make me believe that iv tha con!"

"He had plenty of cunning, at any rate, and in the division of the stolen money contrived to slip a one-pound note into his pocket unseen by his confederate. The remaining plunder was then equally divided, and amounted to about thirty shillings each for their hard night's work. Not a very large profit, perhaps, considering the risky and speculative character of the business."

"It's noane enough. Aw wouldn't start throttlin owd chaps for less nor five peaund apiece."

"Observe now! The one-pound note slily pocketed by Greenwood was issued by the Mytholm bank, was unsigned, but numbered, and was known to have been in the murdered man's possession the day before his death. If crafty Mike had seen this note he would at once have realised the risk of keeping it; but his simple partner in crime apparently saw no danger, for he parted with the note in a few days to a namesake, Thomas Greenwood, of Birchcliffe, in payment for a clock. Thomas paid it to a Betty Wadsworth in exchange for a chest of drawers, but Betty found some difficulty in parting with the unsigned paper, and consequently returned it to him. Now this Thomas Greenwood could not read, and was uncertain whether he had received that particular note from honest Joan or from Mr. John Sutcliffe, of The Lee. For once in a way the national neglect of education was of use. If Thomas could have read the note he would have recognised it, and returned it to his namesake, Joan, who, simple though he was, would hardly have been fool enough to attempt to pass it a second time. Probably he would have destroyed it, and saved his neck. But Thomas Greenwood, a sufferer by the tardy institution of school boards, did not recognise the note. He took it to Mr. Sutcliffe, of The Lee, who knew it at once as part of the murdered man's property. Simple Joan was at once arrested, and foolishly declared before magistrate Horton that he had received the fatal paper from Mike Pickles. Mike was hurriedly enquired for, but had gone off seeking employment, his various occupations presumably not being enough to fill up his time. He was found on the following Sunday at Blackshaw Head, taken before the magistrate next day, and confronted with Joan, whose accusation he naturally and vigorously denied. Simple Joan bungled in his

statements, failed to sustain his lying story, and Mike was set at liberty. Soon after, Joan, seeing that all the punishment was likely to fall upon himself, made a clean breast of the whole business. A constable was sent to fetch crafty Mike back to the court, found him walking calmly towards home, eating parkin, and recaptured him. Having heard Joan's confession Mike thought it his turn to confess, and did so, the pair very cleverly succeeding in proving each other guilty, and before the Ides of March were well past the murderers were hanged by the neck and delivered to the surgeons for dissection. How likest thou the tale?"

"Very little," aw said. "Aw'm noane mich i' th' blood-curdlin line. Iv they hanged 'em it's reet, an' there's no need to say no moore abeaut th' job. Aw guess t' poor owd chap's ghost walks up an' deawn his heause yet?"

"I have not heard of it; but the murder is well remembered and often talked about in the valley."

"We mun have moore imagination i' Lancashire. There'd ha bin a boggart afther a job like that, iv it'd happen't wi us."

There were a pale, thin young chap dodgin reaund among th' tombstones as iv he wanted some thruck wi us, so aw put mysel in his road in a bit, saying it were a grand day.

"A beautiful day," he says. "Truly a beautiful day. In these delightfully widesome scenes, under the influence of this bright sun and balmy air, the inner soul of the lover of nature expands with joy. A beautiful day, indeed?"

He'd leet weshy blue e'en, stickin eaut of his yead like marbles, a fleaur-scawp nose, womanish meauth, an' no chin.

"Heaw mony souls dost keep?" aw axed him. "It seems thi inside un gets ratchin reawm, an' tha'rt noane so fur through fro front to back. Arta fitted wi lastic sides?"

John grinned, but t'other mon didn't. He went on:

"How fit—how appropriate—is this calm enclosure for the purposes of meditation! Away from the hugesomely crowded haunts of men, free from the servile and sordid drudgery of every-day existence, it is sweet to roam here at peace, holding commune with the spirit of past ages. I was employed in shaping a few rhythmical couplets when you arrived. You have probably heard my name—here is my card."

He gave me a narrow bit o' thin card, just big enough to make a cop tube, wi this on it:

MR. RUDOLF CLINTON,

LYRIC AUTHOR.

Euterpe Villa, Triangle.

John were noane to be done. He poo'd a card eaut too, wi "John Istram" on it, plain an' simple. Clinton read it an' looked at me next.

"Nay, lad!" aw said. "Yo're gettin above my level neaw. Aw've no cards, an' no name woth mentionin. Aw'm a weighver fro Rachda, an' this is mi thrade mark," showin him a scrattin-up comm 'at happen't to be i' mi singlet pocket. "What dost myen bi havin 'Triangle' on thi papper? Dost play one in a band or summat?"

John brasted off laughin, but Clinton ne'er so mich as winked.

"It is the name of a secluded village near Sowerby," he says. "My native place."

"Oh! that's it, is it! Why, John, were that th' shop we co'd at yestherday?"

"The same."

"Well, that's summat! Han yo sin that piano-stoo i' th' ale-heause theere?" aw axed Clinton.

"I do not frequent public-houses," he said, as solid as a breek.

"You compose lyrics, sir?" John axed him.

"Yes, I do a little in that way, when I succeed in catching an inspiration."

"Heaw dost catch 'em—wi a net or saut?"

"It has been said that I resemble the portraits of Chaucer to some extent. Perhaps you have already noticed it?"

"It did not occur to me before," John says, "but now you mention it——What do you think, weaver?"

"Aw'll give it up," aw said, shappin to keep a sthraight face some road. "Aw ne'er seed owd Jeff hissel, an' that picther on him wi a dishcleaut hangin across his yead's nowt to go by. Aw've read some ov his scrattins. He were like a tidy poet, maisther, weren't he?"

"Very fair indeed," Clinton says. "Of course, at that time the art was undeveloped, and he could not be expected to produce work equal to that springing from the definitive comprehensibility of present-day writers. But he was very fair, on the whole. He had at least correct ideas of the true basis of poetry, *id est* the presentation of ordinary subjects with decidedness in new and enhanced lights; differing in that from Pope, Byron, Scott, and other failures of the so-called romantic school."

Aw nipped John to keep him quiet, feelin sure he were itchin to have a word, an' axed t' bowstheryead iv he'd yerd ov a chap co'd Milton.

"Indubitably," he says. "Milton's name, by lapse of time, has become widely known in literature; although, judging from the small price paid for his chief poem, his works were not much in request outsidedly in his own day. He has occasional fine

lines, but on the whole is rather jejune. Of course, his subjects are purely abstract and consequently false in art."

Aw could keep John quiet no longer afther that.

"Perhaps you will oblige us with a sample of your own compositions," he said, very polite an' serious, as he generally is when full o' mischief. "What are your chief works?"

"My best pieces hitherto—those, I mean, which blend thought and experience in their most concentrated and attractive form—appear in a small volume entitled 'Captive Starbeams, by Rudolf Clinton.' You will have viewed or heard of it, no doubt."

"Not at all."

"Nor me noather," aw said, "though we yer'n o maks i' eaur facthry. Has it getten abeaut mich?"

"Very fairly; very fairly indeed. Several papers have noticed the work with favourableness, and many libraries have taken copies!"

"And paid for them?" that cruel John axed.

"Oh no!" says Clinton, colourin up. "It is not usual to make a charge for complimentary copies."

"Heaw mony theausan hast sowd?"

"The actual sales have not been colossally large, outside my immediate cénacle of friends. It is hardly a work that appeals to the masses; but when the cognoscenti become acquainted with it, and fairly realise my new departure, pecuniarable success is assured."

"It should be if you can improve upon Chaucer and Milton," John says. "Oblige us with a sample of your new style—the couplets you have just written, say, or any characteristic trifle you may have."

"With great pleasure. Here are some recent stanzas in which you will perceive three qualities—selection of common topics, vivid colouring, correlation of sound and sense. The title is

THE SWEETNESS OF NATURE:

Lines composed upon the lofty summit of Heptonstall hill, on a charming afternoon in the summer solstice."

"Between ten minutes an' a quather-past three," aw said. "Tha'd betther put that in."

Clinton studied a minute, but said he thought he wouldn't, considherin everything; then he started reading his gibberidge, givin it eaut like play-actin.

"Green chickweed by the ditches springs,
The brick wall blushes red;
The sparrow hops about and sings,
The trees thick foliage spread.

There you have a landscape outlined with graphicalness by a few touches. The chief beauty of the lines, as you will have perceived, dwells in the accurate description of common things."

"They're common enough, lad; there's no gettin o'er that. Is there ony moore o' th' stuff?"

"Oh yes!

From pole to pole the telegraph
Its shining threads extends;
The sun slides down the sky to quaff
Such moisture as ascends."

"Th' sun 'll be olez on t' fizz, then, like a boilin kettle. But goo on."

"The varied grasses of the fields
The languid cattle crop;
Short blades like spears, with docks for shields,
Long stalks with feathered top."

"Excuse me, sir," John put in, very solid, "but there seems a slight vagueness about that stanza. Do you intend to state that the varied grasses crop the cattle, or simply that the cattle crop the grasses?"

Clinton looked at him wi pity in his bulgin e'en. "Surely that little commonish inversion of the sentence should be understandable by any thinking man. You must allow us poets to indulge in a trifling license occasionally; especially if it is one that common sense can easily elucidate."

"To be sure!" aw said. "It'd be a dhry world beaut licenses. Whatever arta thinkin abeaut, John?"

"Well, I can only beg your pardon, gentlemen, and promise to reflect in future before speaking."

"My pardon is easily gained," Clinton said, lookin moore like Chaucer nor ever, "knowing as I do how necessary exactful possession of the true poetic instinct and acquaintance with technical workmanship must be for due appreciation of any thoughtful artistic productions. The stanza you call vague contains one of my boldest and most striking similitudes:

'Short blades like spears, with docks for shields.'

If you had the genuine critical instinct—unfortunately rare—that warlike line would strike home to you with a vivified shock of pleasure."

"The passage certainly seems striking, even to me," John towd him. "Very striking, indeed!"

"It comes wom to me like a cleaut on th' earhole," aw said. "Iv tha could make a line or two abeaut cow-horns seaundin, or yon jackass blowin his thrumpet, it 'd be moore warlike again."

Clinton snigger't. "It is a wise rule in elevated writing that an author should avoid overloading his pictures. Experience alone, joined of course to my—that is, to natural sensibility, can decide how far to proceed without passing artistic limits and falling into ornate amorphousness. The additions you suggest, however good as abstract imaginative ideas, would weaken my composition instead of enriching it."

"Dost think so? Lev 'em eaut, then, bi o myens, for it'd be a greight pity to waken sich a peawerful epic as that."

"You missaply the term epic," Clinton says, makin me fair wondher heaw a chap could live wi so little sense o' humour in him. "An epic poem is properly one which narrates with adequate dignity events of high importance or heroic character."

Aw thanked him for his explanation, an' John reckon't to make a note on't, sayin that sort o' knowledge were noane to be piked up every day.

"Do you find any similarity between my style and that of any other writer," Clinton axed.

"Tha'rt a bit i' t' Wordsworth line," aw said; "but richer iv owt. There's a very womly, satisfyin ring abeaut thi lines."

"I have thought myself there was some little similarity between us. But Wordsworth, though a fair writer on the whole, with perception of correct methods, has several objectionable mannerisms. He is also far too much addicted to commonplaces and monosyllables."

John were abeaut at th' end ov his patience at yerin o his favouryte authors run deawn bi sich a putty-brain as Clinton.

"What fault have you to find with monosyllabic writing?"

"I have Pope's authority for objecting to it."

"Yet Pope himself knew the value of monosyllables better than you appear to do, and used them freely. Bunyan, whose admirable style charms every capable critic, hardly uses a long word in all his books. And what about Goldsmith? Was he given to using short words or not?"

"Haw! Really!" Clinton stutted, starin at John like a new wakken't ulyet. "You appear to have some preciseful acquaintance with literature. Dear me!"

"Preciseful!" aw put in. "Tha myens a bucketful moore like."

"I have, sir," John went on, "but my reading has not so far induced me to speak of work by men of commanding intellect as 'very fair.' Let me give you an instance of a four-line stanza containing nothing but monosyllables, and yet of such excellence as to defy improvement."

Clinton wagged his yead, and mutther't summat abeaut that bein "definitely impossible."

"Not at all, sir," John said. "The lines I speak of are from a well-known hymn.

> 'And some have found the world is vain,
> Yet from the world they break not free;
> And some have friends who give them pain,
> Yet have not sought a friend in Thee!'"

Clinton stutted eaut, "Yes! very curious, really! Never noticed it before with so much exactitude. Very fair lines; very fair indeed! Oh yes!"

"I agree with you, sir. They *are* very fair, and something more. Allow me to wish you a very good day, and to beg that, before indulging in further criticisms of men beside whom you are as a sand-grain to a mountain, you will cultivate to some extent the poetic instinct and technical knowledge of which you chatter so glibly."

"An' think on to look at yon piano-stoo when tha gets back," aw said. "It's a greight curiosity, an' weel woth writin a preciseful poem abeaut."

So we bowted off, levin t' little foo wi his meauth wide oppen, an' slutther't forrad, chucklin bwoth deep an' long.

VIII.

We went deawn a lone to another side o' th' hill, an' geet a grand view o' Mytholm valley. We stood on a solid wall o' jagged rock, dhroppin sthraight as a plumbline into what a lad 'at stood near smookin a penny cigar towd us were co'd "T' Hell Hoile," mony a yard below. Further deawn lee Mytholm village, an' lower yet owd Calder, i' th' road again, had getten hissel teed in a knot wi th' canel an' railway. Across th' river, Erringden lifted it bonny wood-covert broo, sweepin reaund bi Stoodley Pike, an' so on toard Lancashire, wi mony a bowd moor an' hillock for company; an' to th' east were Sowerby heights, like giants sthretchin eaut greight arms toard th' brode table-lond between them an' York. Aw began thinkin that county, big as it were, met be likely to cover moore greaund iv ever it geet fairly spread eaut, an' thried to plague th' poet a bit becose his native counthry were o lumps an' holes, but that were a failure.

"Lumps and holes!" he co'd eaut. "Avaunt, prejudiced Lancastrian! Show me finer hill-ranges and dales than ours in this county, or for ever hold your peace! Consider the magnificent river courses—the districts watered by the Swale, the Ure, the Nidd, the Wharfe, the Calder, the Aire, the Don, all these streams flowing into the great main drain of Yorkshire, the Ouse, to be carried by it to the tidal Humber, and so into the North

Sea—consider all these converging valleys of exquisite and varied beauty, and you will understand our pride in the lumps and holes you profess to scoff at."

"O reet," aw said. "Poo thi stilts off an' we'll be gettin deawn this broo. We con show yo for slutch whol th' Roch an' Beal keepen runnin, un' Know' Hill's a fair-sized hillock."

So we started off, findin it rayther yezzier thravellin deawn nor up. On th' hillside we coome to a chapel, where two lones crossed, an' th' poet poo'd me up, axin iv aw wanted a lecthur abeaut th' Civil War. Aw towd him aw thought he'd talked enough for one day, but iv he didn't care aw didn't; so he brasted off schoomaistherin.

"The year 1643 was a stirring time in the Calder and Hebden valleys, and even the peaceable colony perched in this steep eyrie could not escape from the general disturbance. In fact, they rushed into it; for, being ardent believers in Charles the Martyr, and objecting to Halifax being occupied by Parliament men under Sir Francis Mackworth, they dropped from their lofty rock and sought the diversion of battle. On Saturday, the 21st of October—apparently half-holidays where not observed in those days—these bold Yorkshiremen marched to Sowerby, and indulged in several skirmishes with the roundheads, capturing arms and horses, and taking some prisoners. For a week or more these amusements continued, and Mackworth grew tired. On the first November, he left Halifax at four o'clock in the morning with eight hundred horse and foot, with the intention of making things lively for the Heptonstall garrison, climbed the hill while the defenders slept, and attempted to surround the town, a very sagacious step considering the nature of the place.

Rise now, brave lads of York! A mighty storm sweeps hill and forest, the rivers are in flood, the enemy is at your gates! An alarm is given, and flashes round the awaking hamlet. Swiftly the royalists mass their ranks and press to the front, and soon the besiegers fly before them, scattering down the hillsides, many falling in their blind haste over crag and cliff to certain death below.

Mackworth escaped, probably turning in his flight to 'shake his gauntlet at the towers,' and swear a little."

"He'd wish he'd stopped i' bed whol breakfast-time," aw darsay.

"No doubt. Well, after this surprise Heptonstall was let alone for over a year, when Sir Francis came to try his skill again, bringing with him two thousand men and a new idea. Instead of struggling up the pass as before he set cannon on the top of Gunhill, above Burlees yonder, across the valley, making so warlike a show that the royalists quietly and sensibly marched down into Calder Vale and bolted, leaving only their empty buildings for Mackworth to make a bonfire of."

"Hast finished wi thi schoo books, neaw?" aw said, gapin.

"Somewhere about," John laughed. "There is little encouragement to proceed further with so indifferent a pupil."

We slutther't deawn toard th' bottom, crossed a curious owd humpbacked bridge 'at makes yo feel like walkin reaund a cartwheel, an' made for th' White Lion to rest a bit. They gav us good steaut i' stone bottles, an' we desarved it afther o th' hard wark we'd done.

There were tuthri weel-donned chaps i' th' reawm, lookin at a loase end an' makin theirsel comfortable. One on 'em were grumblin in a jokin way abeaut time runnin on so fast.

"Here we are," he laughed, "nearly at the end of the century! I have lived to tire of counting decades, but the year 1900 will be upon us directly."

"Sooner than you think, perhaps," says a chap sittin between him an' me—a thin-faced mon wi very wake e'en, an' a river o' snuff runnin deawn his singlet.

"How so?"

"It is by no means generally known that the accepted dates are all wrong," thin-face said. "The fact is that when Dionysius Exiguns instituted the present system of reckoning he fixed the birth of Christ, either from ignorance or by accident, four years later than the true date. Consequently the present year of Our Lord should be eighteen hundred and ninety-five; and the world's age, according to the Mosaic record, four thousand years more."

We o took wynt at once afther he'd done, an' sit quiet a bit, wondherin. At last one ov his mates said,

"You have certainly a remarkable store of information, Trueby. How in the world do you remember all these curious odds and ends?"

"It is a natural gift of mine," Trueby says, lookin very weel satisfied wi hissel. "I can remember anything I hear or read, and may venture to claim some acquaintance with most subjects under the sun. It is a gift—a very unusual gift."

John whisper't to me, "I fear this learned man is a conceited bore, like so many of his kidney." Then he axed thin-face what his authority were for sayin th' dates had getten wrong.

"I can refer you to Anderson, the historian," Trueby towd him. "He quotes the statement as a well-established fact; and, indeed, there is no reason to doubt the matter. You are, of course, aware that until *anno domini* 516 the early Christians contented themselves with the Roman style of keeping time?"

"I admit my utter want of knowledge at once," John said. "This is all new to me."

Th' antiquary looked at him wi a pityin sort ov a smile, as iv what he'd towd us were nowt to what he could do iv he wanted.

"By the way, Trueby, while I think of it," one o' th' chaps said, "what is the derivation of the word Yorkshire? I offered to bet five pounds last week that you could tell all about it."

"Oh, yes! that is very simple. The old Celtic name was Eurauc. In Saxon it became Eborach, and in Latin Eboracum. All these words mean the same thing, that is, the 'auc' or 'ach' on the river Ure. An 'ach,' of course, is a small hill or mound."

"But York happens to be on the Ouse," t'other chap put in. "What has the Ure to do with it?"

"The word Ouse was applied later, I think, in allusion to the sluggish flow of the current. The Ure is really the main river of the county, as you will see in a moment if you look at a map. Then 'shire,' as you most likely know, comes from the Anglo-Saxon 'scyran,' to cut, in common with scissors, schism, schist, and many other words. The shire, being cut out, was itself cut or sub-divided into Trithings, or Ridings, as we now call them, and Wapentakes."

"An' what the hangment's that?"

Th' antiquary ruffl't up like a bantam to find hissel i' sich greight demand, thrated hissel to a pinch o' snuff, an' towd us.

"The word comes from the old custom of vassals touching the spear of their feudal lord, as a sign of their obligation to bear arms in his service. Hence weapon-take, since altered in the spelling."

"What a lot yo mun know!" aw said, feelin rayther i' th' humour for mischief. "Aw guess a poor chap like me could hardly ax yo owt but yo could tell him o abeaut it."

He looked at me a minute in a rayther consayted road, an' said, "Probably your education has not been extensive, as you appear to be a working-man. If you will avoid technical trade matters I can very well answer any enquiries you choose to make."

"Con yo tell me what mak o' wood clog soles are made on?"

That floor't him, first shot. He stutted, coughed, an' splutther't, but he were fast, do as he would. Yo should ha yerd t'other chaps laugh!

"I think myself justified in calling that a technical question," Trueby said at last. "You can't expect me to be up in all the details of the clogging trade. Perhaps it is your business?"

"Nay, indeed it! You know as mich abeaut th' job as me, though aw've worn clogs o mi life. It were hardly a fair question, happen, but aw wanted to show yo heaw foolish a chap is to reckon he knows everything."

"I never claimed any such knowledge," Trueby said, rayther deawn i' t' meauth, "and certainly cannot pretend to be acquainted with every minute detail of business. Indeed my researches have chiefly been confined to the past, perhaps somewhat to the neglect of present-day matters."

"Then yo'll ha yerd heaw they coome to build Rachda church on th' hill top?"

"I seem to have some dim recollections concerning it," he said, wur potther't nor ever. "The advantages of an elevated site would have weight, of course. Let me see," rubbin his foryead an' thryin to look fawse; "was it not erected in pre-Norman times?"

"It were erected i' Rachda parish," aw said, "an' it's plain enough yo known nought abeaut it. "Yo'll know there is sich a place as Rachda aw reckon?"

"Certainly."

"Well, th' tale is, accordin to my researches, 'at th' owd buildhers wanted to set their church bi th' river edge; but as fast as they laid th' feaundations bi day a rook a boggarts coome bi neet, shiftin every stone onto th' hill where they're planted neaw. Th' architect scrat his yead an' studied a bit, but could see no road o' makin t' woles ston up beaut feaundations, so like a wise chap he sattl't to rear his buildin where th' boggarts wanted it. Is there owt else aw con insense yo abeaut?"

"Boggarts!" the antiquary sneer't. "Corruption of bog-guard, I presume. When shall we hear the end of these foolish superstitions?"

"When fancy's dyead, an' imagination buried undher t' brass yeps we keepen pilin up o through England. Not a minute afore. Th' end o' superstition 'll be th' beginnin o' summat a dyel wur. Are yo for tellin me yo don't believe i' boggarts."

"I have no belief in them whatever."

"Yo'n ne'er sin Jinny Greenteeth then?"

"Never," t' chap laughed. "I have not even heard of the lady."

"Aw've getten into a very ignorant part o' t' counthry, it looks to me," aw said. "Onybody 'at's bin waythercress getherin or catchin loaches knows Jinny Greenteeth. But aw'm forgettin heaw fur aw am fro wom. Happen yo don't encourage boggarts i' Yokshire. We're happen as fond on 'em i' Lancashire as t' Roman sodiers were o' scallions."

"What's that?" th' antiquary co'd eaut. "Fond of scallions! Where on earth have you picked that up?"

"Con yo deny it, wi o yo'r rootin among owd lumber?"

"No, hang me if I can! Scallions! Hum! Ha! Yes! Certainly chives were plentifully cultivated by the Roman settlers, as can yet be proved. Hum! Yes! Scallions! Dear me! Where did you learn that?"

"Oh! we're middlin weel up i' Rachda. There were plenty o' Romans theere, one while, an' tuthri folk afore 'em. Han yo yerd o' Bacup dykes?"

Scallions, Spring onions.

IX.

"Yes, and seen the place," th' antiquary said, rubbin his honds an' grinnin. "You are getting upon my legitimate ground now, and touching a subject upon which I am well informed. The dyke is a fine sample of a Saxon earthwork; a third of a mile in length, and well trenched. Oh, yes! I have been there."

"Come! we're gettin on. There'd be scallions groon theere at that time; but no Romans, aw think."

"No, the Romans came later. Anlaf, the Dane, was defeated there by a mixed gang of English, Scotch, and Welsh, making common cause against an invading force, and probably headed by Athelstane. The three countries have been quarrelling among themselves ever since for want of worse enemies."

"Oh ah! yo known o abeaut it aw yer. Th' Irwell rises up theere, doesn't it?"

"Yes, I have traced it from its springs down through Rossendale forest to Manchester. Foulest and busiest of streams, it shows well the spirit of this sordid age."

"It shows a middlin jump fro th' Saxon dyke at one end to th' fire-proof factbries at t'other," aw said. "They used to build to save life; we builden to make brass."

"Do you consider that we are worse off on that account?"

"Nay! aw didn't say that. Aw'd as soon bi poison't wi smooke as get a length o' cowd iron sent through my ribs, an' liefer sleep on a flock bed nor a damp broo. We're noane badly off neaw, iv we hadn't been born a hundherd year too soon. Yo'n plenty o' thoose owd feightin shops—dykes, hillocks, an' what not—i' Yokshire, aw reckon?"

"Certainly we have abundance of everything in Yorkshire. If you want to see a model Danish earthwork go to Flamborough, and observe how cleverly the old sea-dogs have defended a pass there. You will find a carved oak sixteenth century roodloft in the church, and other things well worth seeing."

"No deaubt," aw said, "but aw'm noane mich intherested i' roodlofts, though aw happen met be iv aw knew what they were. Iv aw went to Flamborough it 'd be to look at thoose wondherful caves they keepen, find th' spot where Paul Jones had his greight say-battle bi moonleet, when he walloped Pearson an' Percy i' full seet o' theausans o' natives stonnin on th' cliff-tops, or sit watchin th' cleauds o' brids sattlin on th' Point."

"Of course, these things are obvious enough, but some of us like to look a little deeper. All that coast is well studded with ancient works and full of interest. Follow the sea northward; passing Filey Brig, over which departing spirits are supposed to go—

> 'To the brig of dread thou com'st at last,
> And Christ receive thy soul!'—

Skirting the vale of Pickering, once a huge lake, and at every step you tread upon buried history."

"He's fairly off now," John whisper't to me.

"Let him goo on, lad," aw said, fillin mi pipe. "He's used to savin other folk t' throuble o' talkin."

"There is hardly a village in that district but has some interesting link with the past. Folkton, for instance, where members of the Ombler family have been buried during seven hundred years, and where the old house of refuge stood, to protect travellers from the wold wolves."

"That'll be a bit sin'."

"Naturally, since John o' Gaunt killed the last English wolf at Rothwell, five hundred years ago. The house was built in the tenth century, by a Flixton lord. Then you come to Seamer, an old Saxon settlement of importance. A religious rising occurred there in Edward the Sixth's time, led by the parish clerk. Three thousand people collected, fixed a beacon on Staxton Wold, took a Mr. White, with the York sheriff and others, killed them, and left their bodies exposed on the hillside. Brompton is near, where John, Abbot of Jervaulx, was born, and Wordsworth married; Ebberston, where King Alfred received the wound of which he died at Driffield next day; Hackness, where the monks forged iron in the last century, and where are to be seen stone crosses inscribed with Ogham characters, which even antiquaries cannot read; Lastingham, where Bishop Cedd founded a monastery in 648—nine years before Hilda's was established at Whitby; further north is Staithes, where Captain Cook, while an apprentice, stole a shilling and ran away to sea; Lofthouse, where Scaw, a Yorkshire giant, killed the dragon; and many another place of renown."

"Han yo finished neaw?"

"By no means! It would take a week to mention half the county history and tradition known to me."

"For heaven's sake don't begin, then!" John co'd eaut, "for we can't stop here much longer."

T'other chaps had pyched quietly eaut whol th' rigmarole were gooin on, so there were nobbut me an' th' poet left to keep th' antiquary company. Aw said to him,

"Yo'n put some rubbish into that yead o' yor's, an' no mistake! It's like a broker's yard, crommed wi scrap iron, stone lumps, brokken timber, rags, bwons, an' o maks. There's no good in it, yo known!"

"Do you think so?" Trueby axed, wi his superior look.

"Aw'm sure on't! A chap's no need for a greight rook o' larnin to sweigh his yead deawn, particlar neaw 'at we'n so mony reference books ov o sorts. What he wants is th' gift o' thinkin,

an' as mich knowledge of hissel as he con get. Wi that an' th' knack o' readin, writin, and doin sums, he'll ne'er be fast, an' ne'er be so fur wrong in his reckonin noather."

Trueby curl't his nose. "I had no idea we had a lecturer on ethics present. It is quite a treat, really."

"It's a bad habit aw've getten, an' yo mun thry to look o'er it. Iv aw'd ony wit aw should stick to mi weighvin an' keep mi meauth shut. Yo munnot be insulted bi owt aw've said, maisther; aw'm willin to own up 'at yo chaps are useful enough i' yor road."

"I won't be insulted in the least," Trueby says, droppin his sneerin look an' laughin reet eaut like a mon. "It is refreshing to hear straightforward talk for once in a way. I should like to shake hands with you, my friend; but excuse me for saying that you are the strangest weaver I ever came across."

"Say what yo'n a mind," aw said squeezin his hond. "It's nobbut fair yor turn should come neaw. Co me!"

"No, don't!" John said. "Let us have no more Tower of Babel business."

Trueby pricked his ears in a crack, an' axed, "What is your conception of the Tower of Babel, sir?"

"Conception!" John brasted eaut. "I have none. It never occurred to me to conceive anything about the matter."

"Weren't it summat like a greight facthry chimbley, wi a slantin shive chopped off th' top end an' a lot o' black cleauds olez lapped reaund it?"

"Not in the least like that," Trueby says. "It was more like a pile of several chimneys of diminishing circumference, or the extended joints of a telescope, terraced round at intervals, and ascended by a winding staircase. It was carried to a height of two hundred yards from the ground, and became of great use as an observatory."

"Come, we live an' larn!" aw said. "They met ha done wur nor spend their time i' star-gawpin, for t' moore we keepen eaur e'en aboon an' t' moore likely we are to get brode views."

"Come along," John says, lookin at his watch. "Let's be off. We have been here quite long enough."

"Quite, lad," aw said; "but we cawn't drop across antiquaries every day. We mun say good-neet to yo, maisther. Aw'd as soon meet yo as two pynots."

"What on earth are pynots?" Trueby co'd eaut, jumpin in his cheer wi curiosity.

"Husht, mon! don't show yo'r want o' larnin to everybody. Pynots are magpies, as everybody knows. Han yo ne'er yerd th' owd rhyme abeaut meetin pynots,

> 'One for crying, two for mirth,
> Three for a weddin, four for dearth?'"

"That's new to me," th' antiquary said, scrattin it deawn in his pocket-book. "I begin to think you know something."

"Think what yo'n a mind, but when yo meeten four pynots be sure to twirl reaund three times an' sign a cross on t' floor wi' th' point o' yor lift toe. Iv yo dunnot summat 'll happen."

"Sign of the cross, eh? Ha! Hum! That may point to considerable antiquity in your superstition, for the cross dates from very early times indeed. Probably the primitive idea of it was a couple of crossed wands directed towards the four quarters of the compass; but however that may have been, the sign is common on old heathen monuments. The great pagoda at Benares is of equilateral cruciform design—"

"Yo're off again," aw said, breighkin in to stop him; "but we mun be gooin. Yo keepen brastin eaut i' so mony fresh shops 'at we s' be no nar iv we stoppen o neet, an' yo'n towd us moore neaw nor we con ever carry away wi us. We s' happen meet again some day."

"Possibly," he said, "before death or after. Take care to be buried in the good old Yorkshire way, with a bottle of wine to strengthen you, a candle to light you, and a penny for the ferryman, and we may come together again yet."

Aw towd him aw'd thry to think on, an' we started on t' road again, gettin safe back to Mytholmroyd bi baggin time.

John ud fain ha' persuaded me to stop o'er Sunday, but aw wanted to be gettin back wom an' begged off.

"Tha'll be busy wi thi orgin playin to-morn," aw towd him, "an' aw reckon nowt o' thravellin abeaut on a Sunday. Nowe! aw'll get toard Rachda afore bedtime, an' sattle mi wife's mind. Hoo'd sleep noane last neet, aw expect, wi me away fro wom."

Mrs. John laughed, sayin hoo thought me owd enough to be thrusted bi mysel, an' hoo hoped aw should stop another day wi 'em; an' t' little lasses coome daubin mi whiskers wi butther an' crumbs, cuddlin me wi pratty babby-talk to see iv they couldn't change mi mind; but aw'm like a very determint chap when aw set that road. Goo aw would, shuz what happen't.

"Perhaps you are right, if your wife will be uneasy," Mrs. John said at last, when who seed 'at noather

> "Prayers nor tears
> Could shake that fixéd soul."

"She is fortunate in having so thoughtful a husband."

"Eh, bless yo, missis! We're like new sweethearts, th' owd woman an' me. We con noather on us sattle long eaut o' one another's seet. Darby an' Joan were nowt to us. Iv aw don't make for wom Stoodley Pike 'll be fo'in deawn again, or some lumber, same as it did when th' Russia war broke eaut. We mun be shappin toard th' station. Aw'm soory to lev yo, missis, an'

these childher, too, bless their little hearts! but weighvers cawn't be choosers."

"I am sorry you must go," hoo said; "for somehow, although we never met before, you are like an old long-known friend."

"Aw shook her hond, kissed t' babbies, an' bowted wi John at mi heels. He seed me safe into t' thrain, pressin me to come again afore long, an' squoze mi neighve hard.

"Tak care o' thisel, neaw," aw towd him through t' carriage window. "Tha'rt like one o' mi own lads, nearly, an' aw think a dyel on thee; so be careful an' let's yer fro thee neaw an' again."

"I'll do my best, thank you," he said, turnin away. Then he coome back an' whisper't, "Remember the penny for the ferryman."

"Oh ah! an' t' bottle too. But there's no hurry abeaut that job."

Then they rowl't me off, levin th' poet stonnin lookin afther us wi a faint smile on his thoughtful face, an' i' tuthri minutes aw were inside t' limits o' mi native Lancashire again, wi' t' Calder's black wayther runnin far behinnd.

CLOGDEN SING.

I.

WALKIN through Clogden clough, where th' little river Clog comes breighkin deawn it stony channel, yo'll see a breek-built chapel stonnin weel up th' moor-side, an' yo'll gate wondherin iv there's ever ony congregation to be fund inside it. To be sure there's hawve-a-dozen cottages sprinkl't abeaut, peepin fro clumps o' thorn an' willow, an' it's noane so fur across th' hill to Smobridge, but it looks a quare, eaut-o'-th' road shop to stick a chapel in.

It's said John Wesley once preighched on this hill-side, hundherds o' still folk ringed reaund hearkenin his sweet tenor an' watchin his shinin face, his dappl't mare croppin quietly undher t' wole, waitin whol he were ready to throt off to his next co'in spot; so this chapel coome to be planted where his sthraight-walkin feet had stood, an' theere it is, a lastin testimonial to a gradely Englishman an' a credit to English art; for it's a genuine wom-made design—four sthraight lines an' a chimbley.

There's one day in a year when that chapel's full, eaut-o'-th' road or not; an' that's on th' singin day. Owd friends turn up then fro every compass-point; scholars, long gwone, come again to see th' owd schoo where they went as childher, bringin their own childher wi 'em neaw; past chapel members turn up fro places mony a mile off, to sit once moore i' th' gallery an' walk through t' fleawer painted graveyard where fayther or mother were laid deawn wi ne'er-forgetten pangs; couples owd an' young come year afther year, wandherin bi th' brookside or through t' lev-hung glens where first they whisper't love together; an' moore nor one creeps soft an' tearful to th' spot where th' husband's monly frame, or th' wife's tendher heart, lies deep i' th' clay. O these an' moore t' little chapel's sthrong magnet dhraws; beside o t' childer gooin to th' schoo neaw, wi o their relations to watch t' little things swaggerin i' white frocks an' new jackets, an' present members wi a friend or two apiece com'n to their baggins; so there's nowt to wondher at iv t' buildin gets a bit crommed.

Iv everybody could come 'at wanted th' clough itsel wouldn't howd 'em, say nowt abeaut th' chapel. Mony a score o' folk slavin i' Merica ud give a hundherd peaund to see this quiet nook again. Sthrange heaw recollections o' young days stick i' folks' minds! Jack Smethurst were a lad here, an' when he deed feightin i' th'

Indies wi his regiment his last word were, as his mate lifted him fro t' thrench, "Aw could ha liked to see th' owd chapel again."

Sam Wheeler too! Nobry could do ony good wi Sam. Restless i' sarmon time, runnin off fro th' schoo, olez i' mischief, brimmin o'er wi life an' gam whol there were no howdin him! He ran off to th' say an' news coome 'at he were dhreawn't in a shipwreck. In his last minutes—when he stood cool an' steady, grippin a rope wi his sthrong hond, lookin dyeath i' t' face wi clear grey e'en, whol some panted, skriked an' turn't crazy—when a fine lady passenger coome up to him sobbin, "Oh, sir! let me hold your hand; your courage and calmness will strengthen me," an' he lapped a steaut arm reaund her waist, cheerin her wi comfortin talk—when th' captain's little lass, 'at 'd played wi him for heaurs an' loved him like o childher did, clung to his knees an' wouldn't stir fro him—what thought were i' Sam's mind? "Aw con never tell th' Clogden parson 'at aw broke that window." An' deawn they went in a hundherd fathom.

Yet it's nobbut a plain little breek buildin 'at plays o this magic; an' it never awthers whol singin-days come an' goo, nobbut when it gets a slate or two off, or fo's a bit ricketty i' durs an' windows; an' it cares nowt at o for Jimmy Layrock's care-worn mind, though Jimmy's t' choirmaisther, th' anniversary's nobbut three week off, an' there's nowt done. But Jimmy cares, aboon a bit, an' he's throuble enough to bother him.

To start wi, he's com'n wom to his baggin beaut hymn pappers, o through t' Rachda printin chaps. Jimmy's a packin-case maker at one o' th' machine shops theere, an' he'd slipped into t' printher's i' th' breakfast hawve-heaur to lev his ordher, knowin it'd nobbut be an heaur or so ov a job iv they'd ony shift abeaut 'em, an' tellin 'em to be sure an' have everything ready for him at hawve-past five. They were behinnd, as usal, though he'd gien 'em o day to do th' job.

"This is a bonny mess, shuzheaw!" Layrock bawl't to a lad i' th' shop. "What am aw to do neaw, dost think?"

Iv he could wait whol toard nine o' t' clock they could happen show him a proof, t' lad said, lookin as unconsarn't as iv his livin were getten.

"Proof be hanged!" says Jimmy, as mad as a squozzen ratton. "Gi mi tuthri pappers to be gooin on wi an' get t' proof afther. Aw guess tha doesn't know Flyin Jud's comin to th' practice wi his hobye?"

"No, sir; don't know him. It really could not be done, sir; we must have more time."

"Aw'll start ordherin t' things a year i' advance," Jimmy said, disgusted. "Fot me them books aw brought; aw s' ha to shap beaut pappers some road."

It were a rainy neet, to mend things, an' as t' thram were full inside he'd to pyerch on th' top, gettin weet through an' runnin a greight risk o' spoilin his alto voice. Otogether, he geet wom in a temper, an' geet weel laughed at bi his wife, a good-humoured lass.

"Tha's ocean's o' time yet," hoo said. "Give o'er frettin thysel an' get thi baggin."

"Th' anniversary's i' three week, isn't it? Aw've bwoth chorus an' band to teighch, an' rough an' ready wark wain't do for hee-class anthems like we han to sing. There's noane hawve time enough; say nowt o' bein left beaut hymn-pappers."

"Tha should ha ordher't 'em sooner. What hast dhriven it whol t' last day for?"

"They should ha six months' notice to be reet, an' then they'd come messin wi a proof or some mak o' lumber 'at nobry wants. It's nobbut tuthri minutes ov a job, mon, to turn three sarvices ov hymns eaut. They'n just to cob their type together, balance it o' one end, daub some blackenin o'er it, slur it onto a sheet o' papper, an' o t' job's done. There's nowt i' that!"

He finished his meal, weshed hissel an' set off to th' chapel, grumblin o th' road.

Jud were theere afore him, talkin to Bunker, th' fiddler; Owd Rafe, 'at 'd wrostl't his double-bass at every sing for thirty year, were just pooin t' green jacket off his lumberin machine; Jabez Meadows sit runnin up an' deawn scales on his silver flute, an' there were some big an' little fiddles, a clarionet, thrumpets, an' sichlike, scrapin an' yeawlin theirsel into tune. O these band chaps were pyerch't on forms i' th' chapel gallery, close to th' orgin, an' o th' gallery pews were full o' singers, mostly schoo childher, but not otogether. For th' choir were among 'em, a score o' clear-voiced lads an' lasses, gam to sing owt their own weight i' th' teawnship.

First, lapped reaund wi majesty, best an' bonniest theere, smiles Rose Ellen Marcroft, as sweet a thribble as ever chirped. Close at her elbow, comely an' steaut, sits Betty Kenyon, a fine sauty alto singer, wi bottom notes like a cornet an' top uns keen as a fife. Next, sthrokin his long moustache, pyerches Joe Buckley, a silver-throttl't tenor. We o known tenors are scarce an' precious. Joe knows, too. He lets his yure hang deawn his jacket collar, usin wot irons to make it curl an' wave like Sims Reeves. He con sing a top B nathural, con Joe, reet fro his lungs or somewheere as deep; he's a sthrong contempt for falsetto dodgers 'at con dhraw notes fro their yeads or noses; he con blend his registhers, yo mun bear i' mind (there's three registhers, yo known—thick, thin, an' kitchen); an' he once took a prize at a Belle Vue contest. That should be good enough to tell yo what Joe con do. Last mon i' th' front pew comes Levi Greenhalgh, a gradely tombstone bass. He con fairly rowl it eaut, con Levi.

Talk abeaut a feaundation! Th' orginist happens to be a larner, an' he plays bi Levi; nippin his foot off a threddle middlin sharp iv it doesn't chime in wi th' singer's deep-rootin notes.

Neaw that's summat like a quartet. They con ony on 'em oppen their meauths above two inches, howd their wynt for six bars o' funeral music, stick eaut a lump i' their throats as big as a monkey-nut, an' tackle oather tonic ale, Sol. Fah, or P.C. staff system, up or deawn, just as it leets.

O this talent has to be engineer't bi Jimmy Layrock. Jimmy's noane hawve a bad singer hissel, an' he con read owt at first seet i' o maks o' cliffs up to as mony as five sharps. Oh ah! He taks his ston neaw on th' parson's platform where everybody con see him, an' co's his band an' chorus to ordher. A band chap's notion ov ordher is to start tunin as hard as he con; so they o starten, t' conducthor waitin wi patience. At last there's nobbut th' clarionet left whinin o'er it throubles.

"What's up wi that gaspipe o' thine, Nudger?" axes Jimmy. "Is there summat wrong wi it inside?"

Nudger stops, dhrawin t' back ov his hond across his meauth.

"O ready neaw!" Jimmy co's eaut, heighvin his stick.

"Where's th' hobye part?" Jud axes, lookin quietly reaund. "Aw con play noane fro this empty music stond, con aw?"

Jimmy flushes up, roots abeaut an' finds th' owd chap his papper. "*Neaw* are yo o ready? A fiddle skrikes, one o' th' young uns lettin his bow slip on th' bant. Jimmy glares at him. Nowt stirs for a minute. "Anthem, 'Praise the Lord.' First movement alleygro. This speed—one, two, three, one, two, three, an' so on. Watch mi stick neaw!"

Band an' chorus brast off together wi dyeafenin tumult, one e'e on th' waggin stick, t'other on their books, but Jimmy poos 'em up dhirectly. "This is wur nor a pig-killin. Isaac, tha doesn't come in reet wi thi thrombone, some road. Hasta getten thi reet part?"

Isaac's a bit dyeaf, so he's noticed nowt amiss wi th' music. He looks up, an' says "Wha?"

"What part hasta getten?" Jimmy sheauts.

"Th' Alleyloolya chorus," Isaac tells him. "That's what yo towd us, weren't it?"

Somebry sets him reet, an' another start's made wi betther luck. They getten through this time, an' Jimmy says they'n done middlin, but he wants moore leet an' shade.

"Yo mun watch me," he says. "When aw go so," bringin his arms deawn gently, "play an' sing as soft as ever yo con; but when aw go *so*," dhroppin his arms wi a sweep, "play little Owdham." So they'n another do, shappin betther this time.

"Second movement, quartet, 'Pray for the peace.' Adaygio. Flute an' sthrengs nobbut."

Rose Ellen's breet soprano rises i' long-dhrawn sweetness, Buckley stops pooin his moustache to join in, Betty follows, an' Greenhalgh starts like muffl't thunner. Th' amateur fiddlers keepen their quaverin sthrengs i' tidy tune, helped on bi sich rare singers, an' th' quartet gwoes off weel.

But what's t' conducthor pooin his face at? "Jud, yo're playin th' air wi Rose Ellen. It's noane i' yor part, is it?"

"Nowe; but it's mostly thought to mend a solo when there's a hobye gooin. That is wi good judges, tha knows."

"We'll do beaut it, iv yo'n a mind. It's noane i' th' part."

"My faythe played a horse-leg aboon forty year," Jud said, "an' aw've a owd sarpent i' th' cellar yon yet 'at belonged mi gronfaythe. Aw've been up to th' neck i' music mysel ever sin' aw were a lad; an' aw s' be sixty-nine come Tormorden wakes Monday. Aw should know iv onybody does."

"We'll lev it eaut. Sir John Goss 'd ha marked it in iv he'd wanted it."

"Goss!" grumbl't Jud, sattlin into his shet again. Iv his opinion's to be put again mine aw've done. Aw'll bet a hawpny he ne'er seauked a hobye reed in his life."

They geet th' anthem sawed off i' time, startin wi another 'at gav th' orginist a chance. He were a young player, very fond o' what he co'd "pictorial effects." He were very hondy wi his reed stops when fire or thunnerbowts happen't to be stirrin, an' greight at freezin ice an' snow wi his cowd flute. He could set brids whistlin i' three-tops, delve clough holes eaut ov his hollow diapason, send his music a mile off wi th' shut swell, grin like a dog, an' run abeaut through Wuerdle an' Wardle. Oh ah! a cliver lad, very. This piece 'at gav him a chance were abeaut t' childher ov Israel crossin t' brook. He made t' wayther rowl back to some tune, bi settin his feet across t' threddles an' puttin six on 'em deawn at once, makin o th' gallery rock.

"What's that?" Jimmy co'd eaut when he could make hissel yerd through t' clamour. "Is there summat stickin again, Abel?"

"Oh nowe!" says Abel, turnin reaund wi a satisfied smile. "It's nobbut a bit ov effect—dividin t' flood like."

"Tha's getten it divided, neaw, hasta?"

"Aw guess so."

"Keep it so, then," Jimmy said, "an' chen it fast. Iv tha lets that hullabaloo loase on th' singin day aw'll divide *thee*, so tha knows. Play t' sympathy o'er an' let's have a fresh start."

Wi sichlike bits ov happenins th' practice went on an geet itsel o'er wi, Jimmy tellin his performers they'd done very weel for a start.

As Rose Ellen crossed th' yard on her road eaut, Buckley crept up to her.

"It's a fine neet, lass; mun aw tak thee for a walk?"

"Not to-neet."

"Aw'm thinkin o' keepin company wi thee, Rose Ellen. We'll start neaw iv tha's a mind."

"Ger off wi thi nonsense."

"It's noane nonsense," says Buckley, sthrokin his moustache. "Aw like thee weel, an' aw'm willin to chance it."

"Dost think me good enough to wed a tenor?" th' lass axed him, smilin. "Aw should ha thought tha'd ha wanted some hee-bred woman bi t' road tha talks mostly. Tha'rt nobbut makin a foo on me aw think."

"There's no deaubt plenty o' weel-to-do women ud jump at me," Joe said, sayrious as a judge. "There's noane mony chaps con sing up like me, an' aw should ha bin on th' opera stage afore neaw but for bein rayther knock-kneed. Aw wondher iv there's ony road o' curin knock-knees?"

"Run a wot flat-iron o'er 'em; that'll happen tak th' curl eaut."

"Well, tha'll think abeaut what aw've said. Let me know afore th' singin day."

"Aw'll tell thee when th' day comes," Rose Ellen says, her breet e'en glintin wi mischief. "That'll lev me time to study th' job a bit."

Hoo left him an' went forrad toard wom, catchin up wi Levi afore hoo'd gwone so fur.

"Aw began to think tha were ne'er comin," he said to her in his deep bass. "Aw've bin waitin to have a word wi thee."

"Aw stopped wi Buckley tuthri minutes. What is it tha wants?"

"Aw'm beaun to come hangin mi cap up at yor heause. We're just a reet couple for gettin wed; so t' sooner an' t' betther. When mun it be?"

"We s' be like to lev it o'er whol mornin, shuzheaw, for o th' parsons 'll be gwone to bed bi this."

"Aw'll get a licence to-morn then, an' we'll be wed o' Sethur-day."

"Tha's ne'er axed whether aw'd have thee or not yet. Heaw will it be iv aw happen to fancy another chap?"

"It's noane Joe Buckley, is it? A chap 'at cawn't groo a byert woth a hep, an' wi a voice like a throttl't kittlin! Tha knows, lass, there isn't a chap o reaund these broos con sing a bottom D same as aw con."

"Thi voice is otogether too big to live wi," says Rose Ellen, laughin at him. "Aw should be dyeafen't in a week."

"Well, aw'll whisper, iv that's o tha'rt freeten't on. Come! what dost say?"

"Aw'll tell thee on th' singin day;" an' off hoo danced, thinkin to hersel, "Yon chap's wur nor t'other. Aw s' ne'er catch up wi Jabez neaw."

But summat mut ha bin keepin Jabez, for hoo o'ertook him a piece further on, walkin bi th' brookside wi his flute box undher his arm.

"Eh, Jabez! is that thee?" hoo said. "Aw thought tha'd be awom long sin'."

"Aw've bin hearkenin to th' brook," says Jabez. "It's a singin voice nearly as sweet as thine, an' aw've sin it glint i' th' sun sometimes as breet as iv it 'd thy e'en in it yead."

"For shame o' thisel! We met be cwortin."

"We're noane cwortin," he said, stoppin an' facin her a minute. "We're noane cwortin, but——" He stopped, studied, an' walked forrad again, th' lass followin. "Yer thee at that throstle, Rose Ellen; it's sayin it prayers on that hee branch, dark again th' moon. Tha'rt a good singer, but tha cawn't come up to that little bunch o' fithers, no bigger nor thi hond. It wants three week to th' chapel singin day, doesn't it?"

"Aw believe so."

"Neaw what iv some young chap were to ax thee that neet to wed him; some young chap 'at's long bin hankerin for thee, but dursen't speighk, knowin he were noane hawve good enough for sich a lass, an' expectin somebry betther 'd be showin hissel; some young chap 'at feels iv he could nobbut get thee for his wife he'd be th' happiest mon ever sin i' this world, an' make it his whol study to tent an' care for thee, an' make thee happy. What would ta say?"

"There's no tellin. Tha mun send him to ax again i' three week. It'll partly depend on his looks. Is he honsome?"

"Aw cawn't tell justly," Jabez said, wi his e'en on th' floor. "Aw ne'er yerd on him takkin a prize in a beauty show, but there's feawer chaps grinned through a horse collar afore neaw."

"Con he sing ony? Aw should have a husband aw con practise duets wi, tha knows."

"He's no moore chirp in him nor a meautin sparrow. There ne'er were one ov his breed could sing. He reckons to blow a flute, but he's nowt at that where a good player comes."

"Then iv aw wed him it mun be eaut o' pity?"

"Nay!" Jabez said, throwin his yead back; "he's noane dhropped so low as that! He's plain, an' simple, wi little set on him; but he con addle his livin wi th' best, an' give thee a warmer heart nor ony. He'll have respect an' love fro th' woman he weds, too, or else dee single."

"Well, we mun see," Rose Ellen said, smilin, lookin him o'er wi o' touch o' tendherness. "Three week 'll sattle it."

So they parted.

II.

Th' greight day coome reaund at last, bringin stirrin times at Clogden. After a sheawer or two soon on i' th' mornin t' weather took up, shappin for sattlin into a fine breet day, an' bi hawve-past ten th' owd chapel were crommed full fro end to side. Plenty o' folk stopped eaut i' th' sunshine, wandherin abeaut near; an' as o th' chapel windows an' durs were set wide oppen th' sarvice could be yerd as weel eautside as in.

O th' singers an' band-chaps had footed up i' good time. Fifty little lasses i' white frocks an' blue ribbins sit on a stage put up o' purpose for 'em, howdin their hymn-pappers (for t' printher had condescended to do 'em at last) o ready to begin; choir-singers were o ranged i' their shops, th' soloists feelin a bit narvous an' wishin they'd nobbut to join in wi th' chorus, whol o' th' chorus folk envied 'em, wishin they were soloists theirsels; th' band had gethert itsel together, some comin wi fiddles tucked undher their jackets—or as mich undher as could be shapped, some swaggerin wi green bags, some—preaudher again—bringin leather boxes, an' one coome carryin a big dhrum nak'd as it were born, wi noather cleaut nor leather for coverin.

Afore th' first hymn were o'er everybody i' th' crommed chapel were sweatin like a roastin joint, but they o sang, blew, or scraped away wi lusty goodwill, wipin their glistenin faces neaw an' again, an' smilin through it o.

In a bit th' anthem coome off, an' then Rose Ellen gav 'em a bit of Handel—"How beautiful are the feet"—givin Jabez a chance wi his flute an' Jud wi his hobye. Jud seaunded very weel, too, owd as he were, but Jabez were th' mon. Ah! Talk abeaut puttin pathos in! He made it fair dither, fottin weet tears fro one or two, an' howdin his wind whol he went as red i' th' face as a butcher's wesh-beawl. Oh, ah! that were th' mak, everybody said. Jud myent weel, an' so did owd Rafe an' Bunker, but Jabez put his sowl into his wark, an' he were a very dacent young chap beside, were Jabez—few betther.

Then it coome to th' preighcher's turn. He were weel-known to most folk theere, as he'd long been parson o' that very chapel, though neaw shifted mony a score o' mile fur seauth, an' he'd little throuble to find some intherestin talk abeaut owd times to dhraw a tear or smile fro his congregation. He wouldn't keep 'em long, he said, smilin o reaund his good-humour't face, becose th' buildin were very warm an' they'd a good dyel o' singin to get through yet; an' then off he set an' talked a full heaur bi th' gallery clock, ne'er seein 'at t' childher were gettin restless, women loasin their bonnet-sthrengs, and chaps slackenin their singlet buttons. But he myent weel. Oh, ah! An' then it were th' singin-day, weren't it? To be sure.

So they'd another anthem, a collection, a hymn to finish wi, an' then everybody knocked off for dinner time.

Th' owd parson were carried off bi th' richest chapel member —a chap 'at bought an' sowd cotton waste, an' were a six-day sinner an' one-day saint; folk livin near bowted off wom, most on 'em takkin a friend or two to share their meight; an' th' band made for Clogden aleheause, where a special dinner were ordher't for 'em.

"That's one part o'er!" Layrock said to his wife. "It'll soon be off mi crop for another year, an' a good job too. Bring that wom-brewed this road."

"Aw thought tha geet a bit eaut o' tune this mornin," Betty said to Rose Ellen as they walked toard wom together. "Is thi voice breighkin a bit, dost think?"

"Aw shouldn't wondher."

"They say'n these thribble voices getten worn soonest ov ony. For my part aw'm noane so fond o' sich hee pitched singin—it's betther to keep nar th' middle for gradely music. Not but what *thy* singin's reet enough, tha knows."

"Just so," says Rose Ellen wi twinklin e'en. "It's a mistake havin these solos. Aw want noane on 'em."

"Nor me noather, aw'm sure," Betty said. "Though some road a good alto piece breetens a sarvice up. But iv they'd axed me to sing aw shouldn't ha' promised."

Whol th' band chaps were o busy at their dinners owd Jud slipped eaut, sayin he'd be back in a minute, popped across to th' chapel an' rommed a cork weel into Jabez flute.

"Let's see iv he'll play betther nor me neaw," th' owd brid chuckl't, an off he scutther't back to his cheer at th' feedin table.

"Come, Jud, yor meight 'll be cowd," th' lonlady said. "Bring him some warm stuff, yo waithers-on! We'n noane bin up sin' four this mornin to put folk off wi cowd dinners. Make yorsel awom, o on yo—it's nobbut once in a way yo com'n, an' yo're a good piece off shiftin th' bakin-day yet."

Hoo laughed, rubbin her fat honds together, an' makin everybody as welcome as looks could do.

"We'll see afther eaursel, lass," says owd Rafe. "Aw've bin oft enough to know mi road abeaut."

"Ah! tha'll ha bin comin a good score o' year neaw," th' lonlady said. "Tha ne'er yerd a betther sarvice nor we'n had this mornin, noather."

"It's bin betther nor last year, shuzheaw," Bunker said. "Some o' th' lads stoole o th' fiddle bant, an' we'd to petch up wi th' parson's fishin tackle or owt we could catch."

"There's too mony fiddles bi th' hawve to day," t' big dhrummer grunted. "Aw've had to peighl away like a nowman to make mysel yerd at o, an' ne'er had a chance o' puttin leet an' shade in. Dhrummin's nowt iv yo cawn't show a bit ov art."

When Nudger, th' clarionet player coome to a finish wi his dinner he cheted eaut an' made for th' chapel. There were nobdy inside, so he shut th' durs, poo'd some soft papper eaut of his pocket, an' i' less nor five minutes rommed th' hobye an' flute so full o' packin 'at noather on 'em were likely to chirp again for a bit.

"Na, then!" he mutther't through his teeth. "There'll happen be a chance for me neaw. Aw'm weary o' sittin hearkenin these greight players—one pipin like a cowd wynt through a knot-hole, an' t'other myeawin away wur nor a papper-cover't kemmin-comm! Iv Layrock had ony wit he'd give gradely insthruments a turn neaw an' again."

Creawds o' fresh folk turn't up i' time for th' second sarvice, an' th' place were packed full again in a twinkle. One mon were gruntin abeaut havin com'n mony a mile, an' sayin he'd gi five shillin for a shet, when Levi yerd him.

"Show thi brass," th' bass singer says. "Aw'll find thee a shet middlin soon."

Heawever, th' chap 'd pay noane aforehond, so Levi took him sthraight into th' singin pew, set him deawn next hissel, gav him a music-book, an' axed iv that 'd do.

"Firstrate!" th' chap says, oppenin his book. "Do, re, mi, sol, foldherdiddle. Am aw to sing bi notes?"

"Plez thysel," Levi said, "but turn thi book reet side up, or tha'll get thi notes wrong end first."

Th' band were deawn to play what Layrock co'd th' "Pastorial Sympathy," for a overture.

"O ready neaw," Jimmy whisper't, heighvin his stick. "Very slow, an' as soothin as yo con."

Jabez finger't his flute wi a flourish an' set his meauth for blowin; owd Jud took his hobye reed between his teeth, an' waited wi th' corner o' one e'e on Jabez; th' clarionet chap grinned at 'em bwoth fro his nook, an' geet ready for starrin as a solo player. Deawn coome th' conductin stick, an' off brasted part o' th' band wi fine effect. T' big dhrummer, carin nowt for Handel, started 'em wi four soft bangs, as he were used to doin wi th' brass band he played in, an' gav 'em a thump or two in a bar, just to keep th' time reet; Bunker sit back on his form, ne'er lookin at his papper, turn't his e'en up, an' dhrew it eaut ov his fiddle long an' sweet; th' clarionet chap, between excitement an' his guilty conscience, geet across in his time, blundher't on for tuthri bars an' then deed eaut; Jud an' Jabez puffed an' blew, but could make no seaund, so they gav o'er playin an' started pooin lumps o' squozzen papper eaut o' their pipes; th' bassoon, wi nobbut a fiddle or two to cover it, showed off rarely, jumpin fro sweet fluty top notes to jackass scrapins toard th' bottom; so what wi one thing an' another everybody geet enough afore t' "sympathy" were done.

When th' singin started Levi's new pupil soon made hissel yerd. Chants, hymn tunes, or anthems o coome alike to him. He sang 'em o through eaut ov a "Cheetham's Psalmody," composin his music as he went on an' doin beaut words; layin into it wi sich yearnest 'at even Levi's big notes couldn't smother him, an' makin Layrock mad enough to hit him wi th' conductin stick.

There were a bonny row when th' sarvice were o'er. Flyin Jud said iv he were to be insulted like that, say nowt o' bein made a foo on afore folk, he'd set some law agate, an' soon too; an' Jabez swore he'd ne'er play i' th' band again.

Nobry had done it—that were t' quare thing abeaut th' job. Layrock offer't to punce th' chap honsomely iv he could nobbut lond his feet on him, an' bwoth Jud an' Nudger agreed that'd sarve him reet; but th' rogue ne'er showed hissel, so things had to quieten deawn as they could.

Rose Ellen had takken care to slip off quietly, fyerd some ov her sweethearts 'd be afther her, an' fast what to say to 'em. Summat mut be said at neet, hoo knew, but what? Hoo liked Jabez best o' t' three, iv he'd nobbut bin a singer. Th' tenor were a bit consayted, happen, but there were no gettin o'er his sweet silvery top notes, an' nobry could match her in a duet like he could. Then Levi were a gradely sthraightforrad chap wi voice enough for two, weel fit to tak care ov ony woman he fancied for his wife. Otogether, choosin coome awkart, an' th' lass began thinkin hoo'd be like to put 'em o off again—happen whol another singin day.

Baggin time coome an' went, an' th' evenin sarvice started—last an' best o' th' day. It were for this sarvice Layrock had picked his chief anthem, "Praise the Lord," so bwoth him and his choir were on their mettle neaw.

Everybody were i' good spirits, for so far things had gwone off weel, an' th' collections had fot a dyel o' brass; so neaw it wanted nowt but a good finish to creawn th' wark, an' set this anniversary on a level wi th' best ov o 'at 'd gwone afore it.

Th' orginist distinguished hissel bi playin sich a voluntary as 'd ne'er bin yerd at Clogden afore. One minute his feet ud be gooin o'er t' threddles like a hornpipe dancer's, his fingers whuzzin up an' deawn moore like forty nor ten; then he'd oppen a sweet ditherin stop tuthri hundherd yard off, wi long slow chords 'at fair made hearkenin folk curl their e'en up an' feel like risin through t' slate; finishin wi a shake on a little soft pipe like a whisper, deein away to nowt. It were sich a fine performance 'at th' lad geet his wage raised next time he axed; so that shows.

Abeaut hawve-road through th' sarvice a young chap crept up into th' creawded gallery, stonnin quietly at th' stairs top, as he could get no fur in. A steaut-set young chap, wi bowd e'en, breet yure, sthrong limbs, an' breawn skin.

"God bless these breeks an' morthar!" he whisper't to hissel. "Slates an' flags, glass an' joinerin wark, o 'at makes up this buildin; God bless 'em o! It's just as aw left it three year sin'. There's t' grasy mark here on th' paint where aw rubbed Bill Ashley yead becose he'd so mich scented hairoil on; that's th' corner where aw used to sit watchin Rose Ellen, an' hoo's yon hersel, bonnier nor ever. Eh, bless thee! There's owd Rafe wrostlin his eight-day clock as usal; an' yon's Jimmy Geslin 'at cleauted me for tellin him Saul an' Jonathan were two apostles 'at propped Josha's arm up i' th' big feight. God bless thee, Jimmy!"

He brushed his hond across his e'en, an' hearken't th' singin a minute. "Peace be within thy walls, and plenteousness within thy palaces." Breet thribble, full alto, mellow tenor, an' rowlin bass blended sweet an' rich, sthrikin deep into th' young sthranger's heart. He bent his yead, whisper't a word or two, an' crept quietly eaut. As he stood wi one sthrong hond on th' stair-rail, just turnin to goo, th' owd bass fiddler happen't to look reaund an' seed him. Rafe's e'en welly coome eaut ov his yead. He part geet up, dhropped into his shet again, an' said to hissel,

"It's Sam, bi th' mon!" Somebry else had sin t' sthranger, too. Rose Ellen had just finished her part i' th' quartet when hoo fell back in her place, white as a sheet, howdin her sides, an' pantin. Layrock had his stick up ready for th' next chorus, but when he seed her he stopped, sthretched hissel forrad, an' axed what were to do.

"Aw've sin a boggart," th' soprano towd him. "Goo on beaut me—my singin's o'er for to-neet."

So Jimmy went on wi his music, an' hoo sit white an' thremblin whol th' sarvice were finished. Then Buckley, Levi, an' Jabez were o at her at once, wantin to know what were up an' offerin help. Hoo made for th' dur, sayin little to 'em, an' th' owd parson gav her his arm deawn th' stairs, seein hoo were fit to dhrop. So they geet eaut into th' yard like a little procession, an' theere stood t' sthrange chap waitin for 'em, wi owd Rafe dancin abeaut him.

Rose Ellen skriked to see him, shrinkin back.

"It's Sam Wheeler's ghost!" hoo said. "He's com'n to stop onybody else fro cwortin me. Aw'll ne'er get wed, Sam, iv tha doesn't want me to do."

"But aw do want thee," Sam said, "an' soon too! Give o'er ramblin abeaut thi ghosts, an' get howd on me. Tha'll find aw weigh too mich for a boggart."

He took her in his arms, kissed her, an' planted her yead on his shooldher, where hoo could cry i' comfort.

"Hello, parson!" Sam went on, when he'd time to look reaund. "Aw'm fain yo're here to-day. Aw owe yo for a brokken window."

"You shall break every window in the place, Sam, if it will give you any satisfaction," th' good owd parson said. "We all believed you to be drowned."

"Who towd yo so?" Sam axed, kissin Rose Ellen again. "Tha knows weel enough, lass, iv aw'd bin kilt aw should ha com'n a tellin thee. Did *tha* believe me dyead?"

"What else could aw do, when o th' news were i' th' pappers, an' a chap 'at thought hissel th' only one saved wrote to us abeaut thee bein so cool an' bowd when th' ship sank?"

"Ne'er tak no notice o' th' pappers," Sam said. "Aw'm a bad un to kill; though it were a toss-up wi me that time, reet enough, an' as bad as deein to be forced to lev th' little lass. Aw'd ha gwone to th' bottom wi her but for thee."

Bi this time th' yard were crommed wi folk, an' there were sich hurrayin, yeawlin, an' carryin on as never. Everybody i' th' neighbourhood knew Sam—that carless good-for-nowt—an' as th' news spread o t' counthry-side were stirred.

"This is gettin rayther warm," th' sailor said. "Come aw'll tak thee wom, lass, iv tha'rt feelin betther. Aw guess tha'll have me again for thi sweetheart; or mun aw goo an' get gradely dhreawn't, an' make reawm for a betther mon?"

"There's bin another axin for her," Levi grunted in his heavy bass. "Aw think, bein away so long, tha should let her plez hersel."

"Hear, hear!" Jabez says. "That's my opinion."

"What's tha getten to do wi't?" Levi axed, starin at him very savage. "Thee stick to thi whistlin an' mind thi own business."

"Plez hersel!" Sam said, puttin his lass away, squarin his wide chest an' settin his big limbs like a wrostler. "What dost tak me for, Levi? Am aw stonnin in her leet, dost think? Does *tha* want her, or ony o' these t'other chaps? Speighk up, lass! Choose for thysel, an' aw'll ston by it, an' ne'er wish thee nowt but long life an' happy."

Sam felt his voice shakin a bit theere, so he coughed an' thried to look as unconsarn't as he could. As Rose Ellen said nowt, he started again.

"Tak a day or two to think o'er it. Aw've freeten't thi wi comin back so sudden, an' forgetten 'at tha's noane bin ceauntin minutes an' days this last tuthri year same as me, pinin for th' time when aw could have another seet o' thi bonny face. Think it o'er—there's no hurry."

Rose Ellen waited no longer, an' cared nowt no moore for th' gawpin creawd. "There's nowt to wait for," hoo said, puttin her arm through his. "Tak me wom."

"Aw shouldn't want o that fuss makin o' me," Betty said to Buckley. "These thribble singers are olez made moore on nor they needen to be."

"They are, Betty, they are!" Buckley said. "Iv they'd nobbut just think once heaw mony registhers they han, happen they'd be less consayted. Arta gooin? Aw've bin shoved abeaut i' this creawd long enough. Come on."

"It's hee time somebry wed her," Betty went on, as they walked deawn th' lone. "Her voice is breighkin fast, an' hoo's gettin to look worn. Hoo's three year owdher nor me."

"Is hoo for sure!" says Buckley, lookin at Bet's rosy cheeks an' plump figure, thinkin he'd ne'er sin her lookin so weel. "Heaw is it tha's ne'er started cwortin, Betty?"

Hoo laughed an' towd him hoo'd ne'er thought nowt abeaut it, but didn't think it beseemed a young woman to have a lot o' chaps danglin abeaut her.

"Nowe, nowe!" Buckley said. "That's reet enough, but one dacent chap met be looked o'er. What saysta neaw? Tha'rt a nice lass an' a good singer for a alto, an' we cawn't o be tenors. Aw'm weel off, tha knows, an' con keep thee wi comfort. What saysta iv we getten wed?"

"Eh! aw cawn't say!" Betty laughed. "Aw've ne'er bother't mi yead abeaut sich things."

"Put this on thi finger," Buckley said, pooin a fine pearl ring eaut ov his pocket. "It'll just fit thee, aw'll bet. Theere! Aw towd thee so! Gi me a buss; we'll start keepin company fro to-neet."

"Tha'll be like to have thi own road as tha'rt so maistherful," Betty says. Tha's just guessed th' size o' mi finger."

Iv hoo'd known Buckley had bought t' thing for Rose Ellen, hoo met have had a wur opinion of his guessin peawer; but that wouldn't ha stopped her fro weddin him whol hoo'd th' chance. Nowe! That is, aw think not, yo undherstond.

Heawever, that's th' end o' Clogden Sing.

BLACKPOOL NOWTS.

I.

WE used to co Hollinoth a weighvers' sayport, but we con fairly turn that name o'er to Blackpool neaw. What wi these hawve-day an' week-end thrips, we're gettin to think little moore o' gooin to th' sayside nor slippin into th' market, an' Atlantic saut's so chep an' soon reigched 'at we con o get weel pickl't tuthri times a year at smo expense.

Aw geet mi first seet o' th' owd ocean at Blackpool, an' recollect yet mi feelin o' wondher to see wayther pil't up like a moorside as t' thrain geet near th' owd station. Th' railway company didn't tak us i' two heaurs i' thoose days, nor put theirsel abeaut mich to make us comfortable, noather.

Aw've looked o'er th' island edge fro mony a cliff an' sondy point sin' then, but nowheere fund a finer sthretch o' say, nor wrostl't wi moore life-sthrengthenin wynt nor met me i' thoose young days, when mi e'en were clear to see an' mi brethin-pipes less chawked wi soot an' cotton nor they are neaw.

Aw'm towd Blackpool's noane a fashionable shop, an' happen that's one rezon for me likin it so weel; for, to let yo into a saycret, aw've a deep-rooted belief 'at iv we'd less fashion an' moore wit we could scramble through life a dyel betther nor we shappen to do wi th' present system.

Aw were theere one holiday time latly wi mi owd mate Ben Simpson. For tuthri year aw'd missed gettin to th' west shore, so aw looked forrad wi satisfaction to th' chance o' seein some o' mi favouryte nooks again. Ben went at my invitation, reckonin very little on it, for he stuck to it there were nowt at Blackpool woth gooin for. Aw felt raythер capped to yer him talk that road, for there's nowt fashionable abeaut Ben; so aw sperred a bit to see what he were dhrivin at.

"Nowt theere, saysta? There's wayther enough, isn't there?"

"Oh, ah! Plenty."

"Well, that's summat. What is it they're short on?"

"There's no scenery for one thing. T' counthry's as bare as th' back of a pigeon-flyer's neck."

"That's summat fresh. What should pigeon-flyers ha bare necks for?"

"Becose they rubben o th' yure off wi gawpin into th' sky so mich, don't they?"

"Th'art mista'en abeaut yon counthry," aw said. "Come wi me an' aw'll show thi scenery enough. But there's moore things i' life nor londscapes. What else hasta to find faurt wi?"

"There's olez too mony folk theere. It's wur nor th' Heybrook chap an' th' commandments."

"An' heaw were that?"

"Oh, tha's yerd th' tale oft enough, aw expect. It were nobbut a spinner 'at took it into his yead to be confirmed at forty year owd. A parson catechised him to see if knew enough Gospel to pass, an' then sent him wom to read up. On his road th' spinner met a schoo lad he knew, an' axed him,

'Heaw mony commandments is there?'

'Why, ten!'

'Nay, that'll do noane,' th' spinner says. 'Aw guessed forty, an' *that* were noane enoo for th' parson. There's too mony on 'em for me.'

So he's ne'er been confirmed yet. Nowe! aw like to be quiet when aw'm off."

"Aw'll find thee places close to Blackpool quiet enough for ony hermit. Tha'd look weel in a cave, wi thi yure rubbed wild, a fortnit's dirt on thi neck, an' donned up in a pottato seck teed reaund th' middle wi a clooas line. Aw'm capped at *thee* objectin to a creawd."

"There's weighvers enoo awom," says Ben.

"Thee keep thisel mixed up among plenty o' folk iv tha'd keep thi wits breet," aw said. "There's nowt rubs a chap into shape betther nor bein squozzen among rib-ends an' elbows. It's a bad sign in a mon when he skulks away bi hissel, freeten't ov his comfort bein disturbed bi common folk, wrong enough in his yead to set polish above honesty. Tha'rt gettin stuck up i' thi owd age, Ben."

"Get forrad with thi lecthurin," Ben says. "Tha's olez plenty o' faytherly advice to cob away, but there's nowt at Blackpool when tha's done."

"What dost think so mony theausan folk gwone theere for every year?"

"Eh, there's no tellin. Th' habits catchin, same as steighlin budgets. Aw'll go wi thee for tuthri days, as tha makes a point on it, but there's nowt to be sin."

We started off i' good time on a Monday mornin, londed in bi breakfast time, an' kest abeaut for lodgins. Th' first shop we thried didn't shuit us so weel. It looked reet enough eautside, an' th' lonlady looked reet enough too. Hoo showed us into a front reawm whol we sattl't abeaut th' terms, an' promised to send us some breakfast in a twinkle.

"What con yo give us?" says Ben.

"Everything in season, sir. What would you prefer?"

"Nay, we're noane particlar, missis. Bring us summat good, an' plenty on it."

Hoo simper't, scutther't off, an' i' rayther less nor an heaur sent us tuthri slices o' shop loaf, some ronk tub butther, a red yerrin apiece, three bits o' curran moufin, two biscuits, a fine silver-plated cruet stond, some taythings, an' nowt else i' th' world to feed two full-groon hungry chaps.

"We're done, Ben!" aw said, as th' cruets showed theirsel. "This shop wain't do."

Ben looked hard at th' scant stock ov eightables, divided 'em as weel as he could whol aw tem'd th' wake tay eaut, an' i' ten minutes we'd sided everything i' seet.

"This mak 'll never shuit," Ben says. "We cawn't live a week at this racket. Aw seed a coffee stall a bit lower deawn t' sthreet, let's goo an' get summat t' eight."

"We'll pay up first," aw said. "Ring that bell."

Th' lonlady coome up smilin, hopin we'd made a good breakfast; so Ben said hoo met see bi th' empty plates we'd bin weel satisfied, an' axed her to show us th' bedreawms.

"Certainly, gentlemen; come this way," hoo said, takkin us upstairs. "We have splendid accommodation."

Hoo'd some fair reawms, as it turned eaut, an' we began to think we met do wur nor stop theere to sleep, gettin some dacent meight eautside; but afther choosin tuthri chambers nobbut to find they were takken oready, we fund there were nowt left for us but a miserable little garret, two cubborts, an' a chilt's crib in a nook o' th' londin.

"Yo're rayther full just neaw," aw said. "We mun thry somewheere else."

"Yo could do wi a reaunt bed," says Ben, "where a rook o' chaps could lie wi their feet to th' middle, like spokes in a cart-wheel."

"Plenty of room, gentlemen. I have often had thirty people sleeping in the house, and never put more than seven in a bed. We shall make you comfortable somewhere. The parlour table holds five—three long way and two across—if that should be full we can make you quite snug on the floor. Last summer we were rather pushed, so I fitted a board over the scullery sink for two young men to sleep on, and swung a hammock in the cellar steps with a breadth of carpet and the clothes line."

"There'd be good ventilation theere," aw said.

"Yes. It was the coolest place in the house, so I charged sixpence extra for it."

"We'll look a bit fur," Ben says, edgin off. "Yo met have to put us on th' cornish, or hang us up in a rowler-teawel iv we stopped."

Th' woman thried hard to persuade us, but we'd ha noane. We paid for th' crumbs we'd etten, went eaut an' geet a good breakfast at th' coffee-stall, an' looked abeaut us again wondherin where to find some dacent folk to tak us in.

A plump little body stood at a dur across watchin us feed, an' there were summat in her smilin face aw liked to see. A card hung i' th' window wi "Apartments" written on it, so aw nudged Ben an' we walked across.

"Good morning, gentlemen," hoo said, wi sich a pleasant honest look 'at we bwoth fell i' love wi her sthraight off. "Are you wanting rooms?"

"Yo'n just guessed," Ben said. "Con yo find us a good slop-stone bed, or a sizable candle-box, or make us a bed up on th' slate, at a rezonable price?"

Hoo looked at him, puzzl't, so aw said, "Never heed him, missis; he's nobbut jokin. Con we have a dacent bedreawm whol Sethurday, an' ony mak o wholsome meight?"

"Come in and see," hoo said. We went, fund just th' reawm we wanted at a price little enough, an' took it in a snift.

Ben felt a bit suspicious yet, an' axed th' lonlady iv hoo bought shop loaves. Bi way ov onswer hoo took us into th' kitchen, where a thrim sarvant lass were gettin ready for bakin, an' showed us sich a collection o' good things as made us bwoth hungry again. Ben apologised at that, tellin heaw t'other woman had cheted us, so th' lonlady undherstood heaw things were wi us.

"We are not all rogues here," hoo said, "although the lives we lead are hardly worth having. You may say our business is made up every year of three months' hard labour and nine months' solitary confinement. Now that the season is on, sleep is out of the question for us. Some lodgers will keep us up late, and others are stirring soon after four in a morning. I little thought to be forced to this for a living."

"Yo'n bin betther brought up nor most on us," aw said, noticin hoo talked very weel an' showed good manners; so hoo towd us her histhory in a simple nathural way, as iv to owd friends, wipin a tear or two as hoo talked. Born o' weel-to-do parents—brought up at a boardin-schoo—wed young sodier—fayther lost his brass—husbant kilt i' Egypt—forced to buckle to for brass to keep hersel an' babby—Eh dear! heaw these pitiful tales keepen comin across us. Who could ha thought that cheerful, obligin little woman had gwone through sich agony as that?

We left her wi feelins o' respect, an' slutther't off to see iv there were owt or nowt i' th' teawn. A glorious, soot-shiftin, soul-liftin gush o' pure sauty west wynt met us as we turn't deawn a cross-sthreet onto th' promenade, makin us sniff wi pleasur.

"Dost co this nowt?" aw axed Ben.

"Oh yigh!" th' owd breek said, settin oppen his sunken chest for th' breeze to fill. "We mun alleaw there's good wynt here—aw ne'er denied that. Why, mon, aw've gwone back afore neaw fair wartchin through th' air bein so sthrong! It's rare wynt—nobry con gainsay that!"

"Has ta ever yerd o' that chap fro Bluepits 'at went wom afther spendin a fortnit here so stiff in his shooldhers 'at he couldn't poo his own jacket off? He started swaggerin o'er it—an' no wondher! 'Talk abeaut gettin sthrength,' he said, 'aw con believe there's summat in it when aw feel th' change this road! As soon as th' wartchin an' stiffness wears off aw s' be as reet as a mail coach! Aw'll go to Blackpool again afore long.' But some road his pains didn't wear off. They geet him on his back i' bed afore long, makin him feel sure th' turn were comin, an' he'd soon be dancin reaund like a young chap again. His wife had some deaubts abeaut that, so hoo slipped off for t' docthor. 'Aw want no physic,' th' chap says. 'It's nobbut a matther o' time. Aw ail nowt nobbut Blackpool air.' T' docthor groped his muscles and shooldher blades weel o'er, makin him skrike, an' said, 'Blackpool air, is it? Physicians call the complaint by another name.' 'What's that?' 'Chronic rheumatism.' 'Bi th' mass, an' aw believe yo're reet!' th' sick mon says. 'Aw've olez said Blackpool air were too sthrong bi th' hawve, an' iv onybody belongin me talks o' gooin theere again aw'll make a row i' th' hole!'"

"It wain't do, owd mon," Ben said, grinnin at me. "Tha's made that up thisel. Neaw aw'll tell thi one 'at *is* thrue, for aw seed it happen. Yon thramcar just puts me i' mind on it. Last time aw were here a gang o' folk fro eaur neighbourhood coome deawn th' station road just afore me, an' at th' bottom fund one o' these 'lecthric cars slurrin away, purrin like a big tomcat, beaut oather horse or engine. One o' th' women nearly had a fit. 'Eh, what's that?' hoo skriked. 'It's off again! Eh, it's makin this road on! It's a witch! Run, Sam!' Off hoo bowted back to th' station, took a thrain toard wom, an' hoo'll ne'er be sin i' Blackpool no moore."

"Howd on, Ben!" aw said. "Iv we're beaun to stick together for a week we mun have a bargain abeaut this tale-tellin. Aw'll give o'er iv tha will."

"O reet. Tha started it thisel, think on."

We walked on deawn th' promenade, creawded wi good-humour't holiday makers, seein so mony Rachda faces 'at we met ha bin awom.

II

"Dost see owt yet, Ben?" aw axed as we wandhered on toard th' seauth."

"Nowt no moore nor common," he said.

Aw looked reaund me, thinkin th' seets were good enough, common or not. We stood between th' piers, facin t' wayther, an' took stock o' t' creawded sthreet runnin bi th' say-brim for a good mile to reet hond an' lift. Behinnd us were th' long sweep o' fine-fronted heauses curvin away fro th' owd Star Inn, stonnin off independent among it sondhills, to th' risin greaund at t' north end. Hundherds o' folk shoved us abeaut, thram cars slurred past, 'busses, carts, an' carriages rattl't up an' deawn, toffy, fleawer, an' papper sellers sheauted, dogs yelped, seaunds o' music floated fro different bands—o were life an' din. Bwoth piers were crommed, breet wi colour fro th' women's fancy frocks, full o' stir and bustle. On one th' fashionables swagger't to an' again, thryin to look as iv they'd never sarved at a shop counther, nor gwone late to th' beef market buyin up chep cuts; on t'other were th' gradely folk, lookin like what they were, an' dancin as hard as they could. Styemers rocked at th' jetty ends as t' breawn wayther coome tumblin in, little cockboats an' yachts dodgin abeaut like wick things close to lond, tuthri big dignified ships showin their brode sails fur back, where th' Welsh hills were peepin above th' wayther-line. Th' sonds were scatther't o'er wi knots o' folk, delvin childher, bathin boxes, toddlin jackasses, nigger minsthrels, cocoa-nut merchants, photographers, Punch an' Judy artists, parasols, boatmen lost i' their shoon, oysther stalls, salvationists, fish-hawkers, babby-carriages, an' Garman bands.

"Iv tha co's this nowt tha'rt ill to plez, Ben," aw said, afther a while, as wi stood bi th' promenade railins lookin wide an' far o'er sonds an' rowlin say. "There's summat here to fit o tastes, surelee."

"There's racketin enough, iv that's what tha wants," Ben says, busy watchin a phrenologist chatterin away wi a big creawd reaund him, just undher us. "Aw say, weighver, what makes so mony folk want their scawps gropin when they com'n here? They'd ne'er think at it awom."

Aw towd him aw hadn't gwone theere to be bother't wi riddles, so we squeezed forrad across a sthretch o' sond to th' Star Inn, rested hawve-an-heaur, an' then made toard th' lodgins for some dinner, feelin i' rare thrim for it.

Feedin done we made north, to see iv owt were stirrin i' that direction, gettin up to Uncle Tom's Cabin, bi yezzy stages. We fund a collection o' shows an' shootin galleries theere, summat like

Scawps, scalps or heads.

we getten on eaur own fairgreaund awom, wi a greight rook o' thraps, carriages, an' wagonettes, blockin th' aleheause up.

Tuthri year moore an' it's likely that heause mun oather be shifted fur back or weshed away. Yon's a rough nook when th' west wynt blows, an' there's little but soft dirt i' th' cliffs to ston again th' say's force when it gets mad an' starts puncin. A mile fro lond, just above Uncle Tom's, there's what they co'n th' Penny Stone, a big rock nobbut to be sin at low tide. A road ran past theere once ov a day, we're towd, an' horsemen festen't their bridles to that stone whol they geet penny gills at a heause close to, long sin' wayther-buried. Stonnin neaw on th' hill edge to see wi heaw wide an' sthrong a sweep th' owd ocean comes snarlin up, we con soon believe 'at th' lond wain't be toein it present mark so very long.

"Hutch up!" Neptune looks to say, shakin his rufflt white yure at th' sulkin wole o' lond. "Aw'll tak some o' thi consayt eaut on thi in a bit!"

Then th' owd rogue fo's back for a run, an' comes wutherin an' peighlin up, lettin fly wi bwoth feet, thryin to do o th' damage he con. Wi th' speed he's gooin at it's nobbut a matther o' time afore he gets to Rachda, savin us t' throuble an' expense o' payin for railway tickets when we wanten to see his face; so somebry's childher may live to find th' Teawn Ho a mile eaut to say yet, where it should ha bin planted to start wi.

"Let's go back," Ben said, gapin. "There's nowt here nobbut what wi con see i' th Newgate."

We were just passin a little reaunt wood hut as he spoke, edgin through a laughin creawd 'at stood hearkenin a chap talkin very fast an' leaud fro th' durhole. He were a steautish middle-sized mon, as wakken as a weasel, runnin o'er wi gam. He'd poo'd his jacket off, rowl't his shirt sleeves up, an' were gooin at it wi every muscle in him.

"Hinside, ladies and gents! Always in time! Always in time! The only genuine cameron obscurer, from the British Museum and Tower o' London, himported regardless of expense. *Halways* ready to begin! Step inside, all you lovely young ladies in the front row—the young men 'll be sure to foller. The *honly* genuine show in the kingdom, giving clear and huninterrhupted views of the British Hislands round by Novey Scotia and the Hisle of Wight!"

Here he seed us grinnin at him, so he winked, rowl't his shirt-sleeves a bit fur up, an' set off again at full rattle.

"You may think I'm lying, gen'lmen, but that's himpossible to a man of my constitution, and considering my bringing up. Come inside! Come in your thousands (his rabbit-hutch met

Hutch up, move up.

have had reawm in it for a dozen folk wi tight squeezin), and tell hall the surrounding natives what you think about the show as you heemerge! One penny for a full view of the American shores and the Mediterrhanean hocean! Silver preferred, and the showman open to receive tips. Not that I want your money, ladies! Bless you, no! I've made two fortunes and made 'em away again. Money's nothing to me! It's your society I want, ladies, and the privilege of looking at such charming features as I now see around me. Come inside! Never mind the money—*I'll* do that. One penny only for a bird's heye view of the Atlantic and the Polar Circle! One penny for the greatest hintellectual treat of the present hage! Mention it among your relations, and put my name down in your wills for any amount you like. One penny!"

Th' show were full in a crack when he'd done, for nobry could help givin way to sich cheerful impidence.

"Dost co that nowt, Ben?" aw said, as we turned away.

"He's a reet mon for his job," Ben says, chucklin. "Iv he'd gwone on abeaut ten minutes moore we should ha bin reaund th' world an' back, beaut ever stirrin."

Baggin time were dhrawin near when we geet back into th' teawn, an' when that business were sattl't we went to th' pier yead to smooke, hearken th' band, watch th' styemers come in fro Morecambe, Llandudno, Barrow, an' wheerenot, an' feel as preaud as we could shap to have th' chance o' mixin among folk o' sich hee quality an' breedin as we fund stirrin reaund us.

Th' boats o' coome safe in an' th' bustle o' passengers quieten't deawn, th' sun sank in a glory o' black an' gowd, th' band finished for th' neet, th' creawd o' walkers melted away, whol at last Ben an' me were nearly bi eaursel. As it fell dark a long line ov electhric lamps were set blazin on th' promenade, showin grandly again th' gaslet teawn, sendin a sthrong bluish leet o'er th' incomin waves for a good way, fadin then into a dull shimmer fro moon an' stars. A seauth wynt blew soft an' warm, hardly rufflin th' shiftin waythers 'at coome wi idle swing, lappin an' ploppin among th' pier ironwark undher us, so we sit chatterin theere whol bedtime afore we made toard th' endless line o' yollow leets 'at marked th' long sthretch o' buildins, where th' day's hurry an' clatther were sattlin deawn for th' neet.

"What sort ov a day han we had, Ben?" aw axed my mate as we crept into bed. "Arta enjoyin thisel?"

"Nowt exthra. Aw believe aw'm hungry yet—an' aw've had a good supper, too."

"This shop licks Mitchell Hey, doesn't it?"

"It may do," Ben grunted, determin't to alleaw no moore nor he were forced. "There's wynt an' waythers theere, same as here. It's a matther o' taste."

"An' smell," aw said.

"Why," th' owd brid chuckl't, "it *is* happen raythe iv oather sootier deawn th' Roch. But soot's wholsome."

"Well, fo asleep," aw said, "an' we'll see iv tha'rt ony betther temper't to-morn."

We slept weel, geet up i' good time, slutther't deawn to th' shore, took a bathin-box apiece, an' walked part road to America, nobbut turnin back when we couldn't feel greaund beaut sinkin o'eryead. Then a two-mile ramble up an' deawn th' promenade set us i' reet fettle for some breakfast. Ben said iv he didn't get some provan soon it wouldn't be safe for folk to go near him. Th' lonlady, among other good things, brought on a thick curran moufin, shape an' size ov a barrow wheel.

"Do you know what this is, gentlemen?"

"Curran loave," we said, bwoth at once.

"This is throdkin, the famous Blackpool delicacy. I can strongly recommend it. If you would enjoy a green old age eat throdkin. It is valuable alike for young and old, and an excellent article for a pic-nic."

"It looks reet enough," Ben says, cuttin a wedge off an' tastin. "Aw've noane mich ov a sweet tooth. So this is nobbut to be had i' Blackpool?"

"I never heard of it anywhere else," th' little widow said, laughin. "I ask all visitors to taste my throdkin, for, like the Arab's bread and salt, it stands as an emblem of friendship and fair dealing."

Hoo cut a piece for me, an' aw swallowed it thinkin it met be as weel to carry a slice to th' lodgin-heause we'd co'd at first, iv there were ony charm ov honesty abeaut it.

Weel refreshed and ready for business we were soon eautside again wi a notion o' walkin to Lytham across th' sondhills. Sthrikin seauth we left th' busy teawn behinnd us, gettin into a quiet region again, wi flat green fields o' one side an' th' say close to on t'other.

Heaw long has it takken to pile up o thoose sond-hillocks on that low shore? T' wayther's had to wortch a middlin while to rowl so mony cartful o' stuff up an' lodge it, stampin it own likeness on th' weet lond, an' then fo'in weel back to look at th' effect ov it wark. We passed wave afther wave o' this say desert, grasegroon, decked wi fleawerin weeds, tunnel't i' o directions bi rabbits, feelin as iv we walked through a solid ocean, comin afore long to St. Annes, at th' Ribble meauth. It's a weel-laid-eaut little place, wi honsome sthreets an' heauses, an' a fine promenade. Noane so long sin', they say'n, there were nobbut tuthri fishermen lived here at what they co'n th' Heyheauses; neaw it's so fashionable 'at fishermen hardly dar show their faces theere, freeten't o' shockin th' young aristocrats at th' Ladies' College an' th' Grammar Schoo.

Provan, provender.

Yet there are times even i' select an' refined St. Annes when wark needs to be done, an' wark, too, ov a sort 'at needs very unfashionable folk to do it. When th' west wynt comes flyin again this sunken sond-yep't coast, rearin steep woles o' solid-lookin waythers to breighk an' dash wi th' weight an' fury ov a shiver't meauntain, whuzzin helpless ships abeaut among th' dangerous shiftin sondy banks eautside, th' aristocrats putten their gloves an' top-cowts on, takkin t' next thrain wom; or else wi slippers, warm fires, close-shut reawms, smo talk an' smother't terror, keepen theirsel snug whol th' storm's past.

At these times sayfarin chaps dar show theirsel—nay! iv they didn't happen to come bi their own choice, they'd soon be sent for. Sthrong honds an' taugh hearts are wanted then, an' fine-weather buttherflees are o' little account.

What's this fine monument stonnin here on th' promenade? A tall column o' rough rock creawned bi a life-like stone figure. An' what a figure! Look weel at it an' bethink yo what a tale o' pathos an' bravery that stirless shape con tell. Steaut an' nathural it stons, a thrue likeness ov a common Englishman in th' full set prime o' life. His sthrong reet hond, lifted shooldher-height, howds a coil't life-line on his back; his lift hond, hangin at his side, rests on a life-buoy. A cork jacket's sthrapped reaund his lusty ribs, rough leather knee-boots showin undher coarse breeches cover his limbs, tarpaulin yeadgear roofs him in; he stares across th' brode ocean as iv his e'en were fixed on some wreck far away, wi sich a blended look o' courage an' tendherness on his monly face as one con hardly believe cowd chisel could fix on dyead stone. A lifeboatman!

What should we don heroes in? Mun they have boiler-plates hung reaund 'em, or be twitched into silk singlets, afore they con ston forrad i' th' front rank? Would that little spitfire ov a Nelson ha bin ony different iv a ragg'd jacket had cover't his uniform an' medals, or would Freedom ha shrieked ony less for Kosciusko iv nowt but a shirt had defended his bowd heart?

Come here, yo sluttherin romance-writing folk, 'at cawn't dhraw a charicther beaut lappin him i' fine clooas an' fillin his pockets wi gowd—come here, takkin yor een off ancient histhory a minute to look what's undher yor noses, an, tell me iv this rough, everyday, sublime shape hasn't as mich peawer an' poethry abeaut it as o yor fanciful pitctures o' Dick Lionheart an' sichlike "heroes," wi gangs a cut-throats at their heels!

But there's summat moore here nor peawer or poethry, summat romance-makers takken little notice on when they're sthrivin for grand effects, an' that's simple fact. This wondherful carvin's bin set up i' memory o' th' lifeboat crews lost that terrible neet six

Sond-yep't, sand-heaped. *Don*, dress.

year sin' last December. Some writin on a smoothed panel tells us so, an' shows a long list o' names—every name stonnin for a lost life.

"Ben," aw said, "dost co that nowt."

He wiped off a tear (he did—aw seed him, let him deny it as oft as he dar!) an' said, forgettin to conthradict me for once, "It's grand! It is so! Aw say, weighver!"

"Well?"

"Let's root somebry up 'at con tell us abeaut this job."

"That's a good thought. We'll thry, shuzheaw."

A chap in a sailor's uniform stood near, so we sperred off him iv there were onybody to be fund connected wi th' lost boatmen. He directed us in a minute an' when we londed at th' cottage he'd sent us to—not in a fashionable sthreet—we fund th' chap we wanted delvin in his garden.

III.

He looked up wi clear steady e'en 'at seemed as iv they'd bin starin danger eaut o' countenance for some thirty year, so we passed th' time o' day, an' Ben axed him iv he were a fisherman.

"Yes," he said, i' very good English, "the sea is my money-box."

"It's weel filled too," Ben says; "but noane olez yezzy to oppen. We'n just bin lookin at yon grand statue on th' promenade. Were ony o' yon dhreawn't chaps mates o' thine?"

"One of them was my father. But for a piece of ill-luck I should have been in the boat instead of him."

That made us stare, but he were quiet an' cool as iv he'd said nowt.

"Ill-luck were it," aw said. "It were happen a good job for thee, my lad."

"Maybe," he says, unstirred bi ony sich selfish considherations as that. "Every hand in the 'Laura Janet' was lost. But we think in these parts 'tis the duty of young men to go first when the work is risky. I was inshore that night, and we lamed a horse in trying to get back when we heard the signals. That hindered me a full hour, though I ran hard for it, too; and when I came onto the beach yonder the boat was launched."

"Tell us abeaut it," aw said, so he coome up to th' low wole, rested his arms on it as we were doin, an' started.

"You mean about the storm? There's nothing much to tell."

"That's quare," aw said, "an' o thoose lives lost."

"You see, when these rough blows are on a man's busy at his work; and when all's over he doesn't feel like talking much."

"Well, talk a bit, then," Ben says. "It were a greight storm, weren't it, that neet?"

"It blew heavy," th' young chap said, throwin his mind back, as we could tell bi th' settin ov his firm e'en. "The gale was sou'-west, blowing against the tide with a trend across the banks. When it blows here at St. Annes it blows, and blows heavy. The foreshore was flooded deep enough to bathe in—or drown in, for the matter of that—and the streets were full of flying sand and spray. The ship was an iron barque called the 'Mexico.' She struck on the Horse Bank, between here and Southport, and there she was with the gale tearing at her showing her lights. Our boat was soon off—so was the Lytham, and the Southport was little if any behind us. Never a soul of our crew came back alive to tell us the tale of that trip. The Southport boat got on the banks, was tossed over by a big green wave just on the break, and never righted herself. The crew were under her a long while, battered about in the heavy seas, dropping off one after another as their strength went, and only two of 'em got back to shore."

"Then they couldn't find th' ship at o?" Ben said. "Poor things! Their lives were clen cobbed away."

"Aye! It looks hard, don't it? But at such times as that, when the work's waiting, and lives of men, or maybe women and children depend on speed, we don't stop to think. 'Twas sad enough, but we're ready for such chances when the boats are afloat; and as we dropped the last dust over our mates we knew well enough our turns might come next, and well for us if we got dry soil to sleep in. The Lytham boat was luckier—she found the ship, and saved all hands."

"Then thi fayther were lost?" Ben axed.

"He was drowned. Aye, aye!"

Aw seed his breet e'en turn dim, an' felt for him.

"Tha were fond o' thi fayther," aw said.

"You are not fishers, or you wouldn't ask that. Many's the rough night I have weathered out with the old man among these shoals. Many's the net we have hauled and cast together on this coast—aye! and many a stout fish we have caught and sold for bread. Afloat together in the smack, alone—or maybe with a couple more hands at times—sailing mates ever since I was big enough to climb gun'le or splice rope yarn, there's no wonder I was fond of him. When the Lytham boat came in at noon next day to bring us the bad news we had a terrible business with the women. Their screams were dreadful. Thousands of people had been on the beach all night hoping for news, and once they had seen a light as if the 'Laura' was making for port; but she never came, and all hopes had died away before morning. The bodies were recovered in a day or two, the boat was picked off the banks and brought in; and I hope 'tis the last time we may have such business to go through in this town. When our cox'n was carried ashore his old mother fell over in a faint, and was many a day in

coming to. 'Twas the third son the sea had stolen from her, and she had no more. Then my father's turn came, and the mother and sisters came screaming round us. I looked in his face. He was dead. He had done his duty."

Aw felt summat catch i' mi throat as aw thried to say they mut ha fund their loss greight.

"Many families were worse left than ours, for that storm made a vast of orphans, and some had no bread-earner left. Between me and a brother, what with shrimping and fishing, we have made enough to live on till now."

"It's plenty bad enough," Ben said. "This sayfarin's a rough job."

"It's man's work," said th' young fisherman. "There's a passage in the Psalms I often say over out in the boats:

> 'They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters;
> These see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep.
> For He commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.
> They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble.
> They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end.
> Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses.
> He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.
> Then are they glad because they be quiet; so He bringeth them unto their desired haven.'

If the writer of that had been a sailor in this bay he couldn't have described our trade better."

"It's a grand psalm," Ben says, "an' aw like rarely to yer a bit o' th' Owd Book, though aw don't read it as oft as aw should do. But thi fayther missed reighchin th' harbour tha sees."

"His days were filled, and he died. He was a good fisher, an honest man, and a faithful follower of the good Wesley. He sank to the Lord."

Th' young chap stopped, an' we waited his time, feelin a dyel but not likin to speighk. Afther a minute he said iv we'd goo into th' heause he'd show us a printed account ov heaw th' "Mexico" crew were saved bi th' Lytham lifeboat.

We followed him into a comfortable kitchen, plain furnished but warm an' snug enough. An owd woman, wi a face wrinkl't like th' pile o' netwark in a nook near her, sit rockin at th' hobend. Some breet brass candlesticks twinkl't on th' cornish, an' in th' window bottom were a hawve-cut model ov a boat lyin again a hondful o' boil't crabs.

Th' owd dame smiled an' nodded at us, but said nowt.

"My mother is very deaf," th' young chap towd us. He bent to her ear, raisin his voice. "Two gentlemen asking about the wreck, mother."

Hoo nodded at us again, wi less breetness in her face, layin a shrivell't hond on her son's neighve as iv hoo loved to touch him. He brought us some newspappers eaut, so we dhrew cheers up to a square table, an' undher that humble fisherman's roof we read a tale of heroic wark done bi sich as hissel—his mates and neighbours—done an' towd in th' same simple monful style, as iv among these noble souls sich things were nobbut matthers ov everyday chance. There's no need to set o deawn again here, for th' tale's weel known; but to get a clear knowledge ov o that sad mishap we'll look for a minute at some evidence gien at th' Board o' Thrade inquiry, chiefly by that brave mon Thomas Clarkson, coxswain o' th' Lytham lifeboat.

It coome eaut 'at th' "Mexico" were bund fro Liverpool to Guayaquil, but could make no yeadway again th' furious wynt. Hoo dhrifted abeaut for hawve a day, sthrikin on th' Horse Bank between nine an' ten at neet. Danger leets were set brunnin, were sin fro Lytham pier, an' th' lifeboat were off i' less nor twenty minutes, undher sail, feightin a terrible wynt dyed again it. Two heaurs thoose bowd sailors fowt their road inch by inch, when pop! th' ship leets went eaut an' they were fast which road to steer. It never seemed to sthrike ony on 'em to turn back, though not a soul among 'em knew wheere they were makin for nor what they'd find at th' end o' their journey.

Another hawve heaur they rived an' struggl't forrad, whol guided bi sheauts fro th' wrecked crew they fund th' ship, fast stuck, masts brokken short off, th' say makin a clen sweep o'er her.

Hearken neaw that cool hond ov a coxswain tell his tale.

EVIDENCE OF THOMAS CLARKSON.

As we approached the wreck the water broke, and four or five times the boat was full. I called out to the men to take the masts and sails down. As soon as this was done the sea gave us a lurch and we broke three or four oars. The boat got partly on her beam ends. I told them to keep her head to the sea, and she made for the ship with her shoulder to the waves. When we got to the "Mexico" the captain threw a black box about a foot square to the lifeboat, but it went into the water.

He said, "That is the ship's papers."

I said, "You are done—you can't get them now."

One of the crew caught hold of the rope to lower himself, when the ship settled a bit, so he got nervous and slipped down the side; but we caught hold of him and lugged him in head first. Then a couple came down safe enough, but the next man broke the rope, and we had to whistle and wait till they rigged another. The next two men got down together safe on one rope, but the next man hurt his leg on the rudder. We got 'em all off. The captain lowered himself last with a rope made fast round him, and we swung him right into the middle of the boat. He was an elderly man. I said to him,

"Have you seen any other boats before we came?"

He said, "No—yours is the first."

We could see a big crowd gathered on shore, burning lights. The next thing was, what were we going to do in a sea like that? We had to get the boat round some way, so I said to the men,

"Go ashore with her; it will be best."

We let her drift towards the shore, but she did not do exactly to my liking, so I turned her round. We put her on the port tack, and a tremendous sea came smack over us. The captain said, "You have a very good boat." When we had gone about a hundred yards we were knocked into a hollow space. The sea was not so heavy now. As we passed Southport pier I said to the captain,

"Will you go ashore here, or will you come with us?"

He said, "Where *you* go, I will go."

So we made straight for Lytham, and got home about half-past three in the morning, all in the boat wet through and half-drowned.

"What mak o' folk are we readin abeaut?" Ben axed, takkin some sthrides across th' kitchen floor, his toppin stickin up i' bristles. "Are they giants or gradely chaps, talkin an' carryin on so unconsarn't wi Dyeath gawpin oppen-meauthed to swallow 'em. 'Knocked into a hollow space,' he says! Aw con see yo theere, too, yo dardevil beggars, sweighin hard on yor oars, wi th' wynt ravin aboon an' greight wayther-hillocks wortin abeaut o reaund. Good Lord! An' when yo coome to Seauthport yo wouldn't condescend to get eaut, hardly bein dhreawn't enough to satisfy yo—nowt ud do but sailin across th' river again! Oh, behanged to that mak o' wark! Dhry lond's good enough for me. Surelee they're noane common sailors 'at con o'er-ride th' ocean's crazy fits that road?"

"They are just such men as myself," th' young chap said, smilin at Ben's excitement. "We are all mates together."

"Tha'll ha bin eaut thisel mony a time?" aw said.

"Many a time, and hope to be again."

"Is it sich a pleasant job, then, makes yo o seem so anxious to be among it?"

"No, not very pleasant, but 'tis expected we shall be ready to go out when wanted; and so, of course, we always *are* ready, you see."

"Oh, ah, aw con see! Well, iv ever aw'm shipwrecked, aw hope Tommy Clarkson may be somewheere abeaut wi his rope. Aw dun hnow what mak ov a fairweather friend he makes, but he's a clinker in a storm."

We shapped for off, as time showed no signs o' waitin for us, an' we'd plenty to do. We shook honds wi th' owd dame an' her son, offerin him some brass for his throuble, but he put it away wi a laugh an' went back to his delvin, as cool as if he'd ne'er done owt in his life but eight an' sleep.

Toppin, the hair on the forehead.

When we'd getten a piece on th' road beaut speighkin, aw turn't to mi mate.

"Neaw, Benjamin Simpson, Esquire, is *that* owt?"

"Give o'er, do," he mutther't. "Never ax me that foolish question no moore. Yon's a fine lad—a very fine lad! We cawn't breed that mak i' facthries."

"Nowe!" aw said. "It taks years o' wark an' danger, wi nowt solid undherfoot an' nobbut th' stark-nak'd sky aboon, to shape a charicther like yon. He makes me feel some little, aw con tell thee."

"Me too. Ah, we'n fund summat at last—but we're noane i' Blackpool neaw, think on."

IV.

Th' road kept us among sond-hills yet, runnin past hawve-cleared plots for new sthreets, past th' Rachda childhers' cottage, past t' Manchesther lads campin-greaund, on to Lytham, one o' th' bonniest little shops i' o Lancashire. Timber con groo theere, an' it's encouraged to do, for threes are planted in every sthreet, lookin some pratty wi their ruffl't yeads o' leet or dark green, an' offerin wholsome shade or shelther to everybody. Fleawers thrive at Lytham, an' bi th' look o' things gardeners are plentiful. Fro th' owd dark red ivy-cover't church to th' new bandstand on th' pier, there's hardly a feaw buildin or ugly seet onywheere abeaut; but every point an' corner shows some beauty or another for th' satisfied e'e to rest on. Then fro th' promenade there's grand views o' th' weel-wooded Ribble coast toard Preston, an' fair opposite there's Hesketh Bank an' Seauthport, wi th' dyeadly Horse Bank runnin eaut it long tongue o' sond. Fur reaund to th' reet some Welsh hills peep o'er t' wayther edge, lookin to nod an' wink at us across th' shiftin waves.

There's a greight park at Lytham belongin th' Clifton family, an' somewheere inside it there's a mansion heause. We didn't get fur enough in to find that, but were takken up wi th' wide-spreadin acres o' green, wi clumps o' timber scatther't abeaut for orniments, an' tuthri cattle for use.

We geet eaut through a fine carriage road bordher't wi honey-suckle, laburnum, an' rhodidendhron, o i' full bloom, wi' a backin o' green fir, beech, poplar, an' willow. O'er th' enthrance gate there's a bent stone arm, brokken short off aboon th' elbow joint, boiler-plated, th' hond gripin a dagger, an' scrawl't undher we spelt eaut a Latin motto myenin 'at th' Clifton breed were gam to win or dee; but aw hardly think there'll be mich feightin to fill their time up neaw, an' cawn't see what use their motto con be. Iv they'd hang a sign up,

"Visitors Requested to Explore the Grounds,
Free Teas at the Hall,"

their park met soon be betther used nor it's i' th' habit o' bein, an' th' fine say-promenade wouldn't be as bare o' folk as it is i' general.

We walked reaund th' churchyard, too, findin it as pratty a place to be laid deawn in as a body need wish for. Aw've a wakeness for graveyards, an' olez feel content wi dyead folk reaund me. They're good to talk to, for one thing, never speighkin eaut o' their turn, starin, nor makin remarks abeaut folk, never weary o' hearkenin th' longest tales, never conthradictin nor gettin eaut o' temper. Some o' th' stones are i' very bad fettle, for they're cut eaut ov a britchel slaty sort o' stuff wi no lastin qualities abeaut it, so they'n getten cracked an' chipped o roads.

Th' finest piece o' monumental wark theere's a memorial to th' lost lifeboat crews, showin 'em busy at their wark in a storm; an' th' simplest is this, chisell't on a plain square flag:—

E D W A R D
C R O O K—
—A L L. A.D.
1714.

Edward lies as quiet in his crack as iv he'd a whol stoneful o' flattherin twaddle written o'er him. We left him theere among his mates, o takkin long an' deep rest i' their bonny garden; for a garden it is, fair shut in wi green branches, jewelled wi mony a tinted fleawer, hung reaund wi th' gowd laburnum tassels shinin up an' deawn every sthreet an' plot i' Lytham teawn.

Abeaut this time Ben started grumblin o'er bein hungry again, sayin he couldn't tell what were comin o'er him, as he were ne'er bother't that road awom; so we hunted up summat t' eight, an' looked up a thrain to carry us back to Blackpool.

Aw've said now abeaut t'other lodgers yet. We'd a heauseful otogether, an' geet on in a sociable friendly way when we met at mealtimes or in th' common sittin reawm. Aw've no need to spend time thryin to describe 'em—yo known what they are, an' heaw mich alike folk con be when they're off i' lodgins. There's olez th' woman 'at brings her tay an' sugar, comm an' brush, an' feels a terror o' being cheted; there's th' chap 'at grumbles hard, ne'er thanks onybody for takkin pains to plez him, knocks a shillin off his bill, an' levs nowt for th' sarvant; there's th' very genteel body 'at wears mittens an' slippers, talks very fine, feels a bit moore select nor th' common stock, an' sits bi hersel i' some frozzen nook whol other folk are warmin their hearts wi general chat an' joke; there's th' hard-wortchin mother o' thirteen 'at taks every chance o' teemin long tales ov her childher into th' refined

body's dyeaf ears, never dhremin her talk's noane welcome; an' mostly there's a comic, wi a yead full o' nonsense, to keep everybody wakken an' plenty o' gam gooin.

We sit talkin awhile to a Preston chap co'd Firth, a retired grocer wi good manners an' plenty o' common sense, shappin off to bed o together, as we slept next reawms to one another.

Aw slept seaund enough whol three o' t' clock next mornin, wakkenin up then to find th' grey mornin peepin at me, an' a curious scent hangin abeaut. Ben wakken't up too an' started sniffin.

"It's ham an' eggs, as aw'm a sinner!" he co'd eaut next minute, jumpin on to th' floor an' gettin inside his clooas. "Aw cawn't ston this? Aw ne'er felt so hungry in o mi life."

"There's nowt here to make onybody hungry, is there?" aw said, donnin misel, feelin ready enough for a good breakfast, soon as it were. "Tha'd best start bringin a lump o' throdkin to bed."

Ben nobbut grunted an' set off wi me at his heels. Comin to th' kitchen who should we find but Firth busy cookin in his shirt sleeves.

"Good morning," he said, quite unconsarn't, as we went in. "Are you always up so early?"

"Nay!" aw said. "It's like raythor sooner nor common wi us. Are *yo* olez up i' th' middle o' th' neet playin wi that fryin-pon?"

"Very often!" he towd mi wi a deep sigh. "It's very seldom I can rest long in bed."

"What's to do wi yo?" Ben axed him. "Han yo some inside complaint?"

"Inside? Yes, you have it. I have such a confounded appetite that I never get any peace for it."

"Aw'm gettin a bit th' same road misel," says Ben. "Aw could eight a sheep just neaw, aw do believe. Put some moore collops on whol aw find a kettle an' th' coffee pot."

We o set too an' shapped a breakfast i' quicksticks, sittin deawn i' th' pale mornin leet, like three boggarts just finishin wark for th' neet.

"I signed the pledge a bit since," Firth towd us, when th' pangs ov his hunger sattl't deawn. "My wife said I drank too much, so I reformed. At that time I could drink a glass of whisky at bedtime and sleep like a top all night; now I save the cost of spirits, lose my natural rest, and am obliged to spend so much money on food every week that I have been seriously wondering whether it would be possible to reduce the holding capacity of my stomach in some way, as fire-grates are lessened in width by having a brick slipped in at each end. This business is awful! I feel virtuous, certainly, but half the pleasure of living is gone."

Gam, game, sport.

We did nowt but laugh at him, so he helped hissel to another collop an' went on.

"It's always been my luck to suffer for moral principles, somehow or other. When I was quite a lad our folks drove a lot of diabolical aphorisms into my system, and my natural conscientiousness forced me to live—or rather to obstruct my life—by these wise saws. I consider that Benjamin Franklin and such miserable humbugs have done incalculable harm to the human race."

"Heaw so?" aw said. "Aw thought Ben were a philosopher like his namesake here."

"So he was," Firth said, his jolly red face ratchin wi a brode grin. "Philosophers are the biggest nuisances I have to deal with. 'Early to bed and early to rise,' eh? 'A penny saved is a penny gained,' isn't it? You know the sort of rubbish these idiots talk. I made the mistake of following their advice, and now, after sticking to business for thirty years, I have no pleasure away from it. I call it fairly open to question whether these eternal lectures on thrift do most harm or good. They turn out plenty of selfish and miserly people, but no amount of preaching seems to cure a spendthrift. You behold in me a ruined man. I have got money and can't enjoy it; whereas, but for the moralising humbugs who profess to teach us, I should have enjoyed myself going along and had money enough too."

"That's reet," aw said. "Have a saup moore coffee an' start again."

He passed his cup to be filled, but said he wouldn't sarmonize ony moore, as he could plainly see his wisdom were nobbut wasted on such leatheryeads as us.

In a bit wi finished donnin eaursel an' turn't eaut for a walk on th' beach.

"This reminds me o' Cheesden," Ben chuckl't as we walked on.

"Heaw so?"

"Why, there's no clocks theere, dost see! As their greight local poet sings,

> 'They eighten when they're hungry,
> They dhrinken when they're dhry,
> They gwone to bed at dark,
> An' getten up wi th' wakkenin sky.'

Iv we aren't just carryin on abeaut th' same speed aw'm noane here."

It were abeaut four o' t' clock ov a dull cleaudy mornin, an' th' air whistl't past us keen an' sauty. Far to th' east a dim shine showed 'at th' sun had getten up an' were busy mixin dayleet somewheere behinnd his cleaudy curtains, but he didn't shap to show his bare nose. What a stillness were reaund us! Tuthri heaurs afore we'd yerd racket enough on that shore, tuthri heaurs moore

Ratchin, stretching.

an' th' dyeafenin tumult ud be i' full swing again ; yet for owt we could see there metn't ha bin a wick soul for ten mile reaund. Th' very bathin vans had a ghostly look, a thin mist hangin reaund 'em ; an' th' concert buildins on th' pier end looked like fairy pavilions just breighkin through enchanted white smooke mony a mile off. Th' say row'lt snarlin up, showin it white rows o' teeth in a sulky fashion, but wi little hint o' what it were capable on when one ov it mad higs took it ; an' aw thought once again o' that fine stone in Lytham churchyard, carved on one side wi a picther ov a lifeboat crew eaut in a storm, letther't in another place wi th' litany verse,

"In all time of our tribulation,
In the hour of death
And in the day of judgment,
Good Lord deliver us."

Soon afther five th' teawn started wakkenin up. A dog ran deawn th' promenade, tuthri gulls flew swirlin reaund th' pier-ends, milk-carts coome rattlin in fro Marton, Singleton, an' t'other farmin villages reaund abeaut, chimbleys began to smooke, blinds to rise, chamber windows to fly oppen.

Afore so long Firth an' Ben were grumblin o'er bein hungry again, an' aw felt a tidy yammerin i' mi own cubbort but dursen't mention it.

"It's no use!" Firth says. "This confounded Blackpool air will drive me to the workhouse before long. I can't afford to go on at this rate. There is nothing for it but taking to drink again in self-defence."

"Nay, aw wouldn't do so," Ben says. "Stick it eaut neaw yo'n started. It *is* a sickenin wholsome shop is this—mi singlet's gettin tight bi neaw, an' aw feel as iv mi face had bin rubbed o'er wi a soft breek."

Aw kept me meauth shut an' we plodded on toard some breakfast, feelin a dyel betther afther it.

Ben an' me spent most o' th' day in a sail to Morecambe an' back, findin plenty o' fine seets an' havin gam enough on th' creawded boat. We walked o'er th' little toy waytherin-place, wi it fine bed o' slutch, looked an' longed at Grange across th' sondy bay, rode as far as bonny Heysham, co'd to see Longmire, th' ex-champion wrostler, an' then had to bustle back.

Ben had ne'er sin Longmire afore, so he took stock ov o th' belts an' cups hangin up in a glass case, starin wi wonder at th' feightin mon's greight limbs, moore like baulks ov oak nor common legs, an' talked a good bit abeaut him as we sailed back.

Aw towd him heaw aw once went to Grasmere sports, wheere Longmire—his wrostlin fayver o'er—sits neaw as umpire. Their greaund's weel picked for th' job, risin above th' ring so as to make good seein, wi th' Silver How for a backset. T' weather's

noane quite as suitable, for it's rained every sports day in th' last theausan year or theereabeauts, so folk han long sin' gien o'er expectin it to keep fine.

Ah! but there were giants on th' floor that day! Aw watched th' heavy weights rive at one another for heaurs, an' could feel th' close-packed creawd sweigh wi excitement as th' slow gam were played eaut. Two champions kept deawnin mon afther mon, winnin every desperate tussle reet afore 'em, an' aw began to wondher what 'd happen when they met. Time brought 'em together, every mon beside licked an' cobbed eaut o' their road, an' they faced up as iv their wark were nobbut just beginnin, o their hard strugglin afore gooin for nowt. Big among th' biggest were these two; yet one took t'other to his wide breast, lapped him reaund wi giant arms, an' turn't him o'er helpless in hawve-an-heaur.

"Steadman! Steadman!" everybody yelled.

"What's his name?" aw axed a chap next me, an' whol aw live aw con ne'er forget his stare o' wondherin scorn as he grunted,

"Ye daft loon! What dean't ye knaw oor Jarge?"

"Nowe," aw said, "to mi shame be it spokken, aw've ne'er yerd on him afore; but there's one thing sure—aw s' ne'er forget him again whol aw'm crawlin."

So Jarge stood up i' th' mizzlin rain whol th' champion's belt were put into his fleaurscawp ov a hond, his honest whisker-fringed face as quiet an' simple as iv he knew nowt abeaut bein t' sthrongest an' best wrostler in o brode England; an' aw went away, weet through, but content.

V.

Thursday we spent i' Blackpool, gooin to most o' th' shows an' concert reawms. What a grand shop that Winther Garden is, to be sure! Even Ben were forced to alleaw *that* were summat, when we'd stood undher th' hee dome, walked reaund th' fernery, fleawery halls an' eautside plots, an' fund upo what a grand scale folk were cared for. Yo con find everything theere fro beawlin greens to beefsteaks, an' go to a music hall, theaythre, an' skatin rink o at once.

Talkin abeaut th' music hall reminds me 'at th' stage dhrop-curtain were deawn when we geet inside, an' a card were hangin up, "Interval of Fifteen Minutes." We took a walk reaund th' dinin reawms for hawve an heaur or so, comin back to find th' same notice hangin.

"They're slow-motion't here," aw said to a chap near us. "Heaw long is this intherval to last yet?"

Fleaurscawp, flour scoop.

"Oh!" he says, "the lady gymnasts have just gone off. You have only missed them by a minute."

So we went into th' shootin gallery thryin to hit slurrin ducks, but didn't shine at that job. When we geet back to th' concert hall we seed another intherval gooin on, th' same colour as t'other two, so we gav th' business up an' slutther't off.

There's a rare band at th' Gardens, raythor different fro that playin for dances just inside t' seauth pier enthrance. That's made up—or were that day—ov a clarionet, three fiddles, a double bass, an' a cornet. Th' performers han no meal-time alleawed, as gangs o' fresh dancers keepen comin t' day through, so they gwone in their turns to feed; but goo when yo will th' clarionet player's theere. Heaw he shaps it aw could never tell, but theere he is.

Fiddles may come, fiddles may go,
But he blows on for ever.

Once, an' nobbut once, he were known to stop. Th' fiddles had slipped up to th' refreshment bar for some ale, th' cornet were off gettin his dinner, so th' bass an' clarionet were left wi o th' responsibility on their shooldhers o' keepin th' music gooin. At this important an' anxious minute, th' clarionet blower felt in his saycret mind he were beaun to sneeze. Throttlin his inclination nobbut made things wur, an' th' sneeze more terrible when it coome. He sneezed fourteen times as fast as he could, hopin to petch up again beaut hindherin th' dancers, but his hopes were idle. Th' bass, left bi itsel, grunted helpless to mark time for so mony busy feet, an' th' dancers, awesthruck at th' stoppage o' their favourite pipe—a thing never known or dhrem't on afore—poo'd up wi one consent whol th' familiar notes seaunded again wi fresh energy, an' th' world started turnin reaund again. It's said th' vexed performer sent a challenge to th' first fiddler for levin him beaut band that road, but aw ne'er believed th' tale misel, not seein heaw th' clarionet could spare time for a duel, an' knowin fiddlers are desperate bad to shoot.

We went to Raikes Hall, too. That's a fine spot, full o' variety an' dodges for passin time o'er. Th' gardens theere are very pratty, an' there's a lake beside, happen delved eaut becose there's sich a scarcity o' wayther i' th' neighbourhood.

We stood a while bi th' dancin stage watchin merry couples spin reaund, an' aw were reminded o' mi own experiences i' th' dancin line, for little as yo met think it, aw once took lessons i' that fine art. They were noane very fashionable lessons to be sure; for t' maisther were a facthry hond, th' academy were a cottage garret, th' enthrance fee were nobbut twopence, th' pupils were o lads, an' th' band were made up o' one tin whistle an' a

Slurrin, sliding.

comm lapped wi papper. We made th' music i' turns, for onybody could play; becose iv th' time were marked we cared nowt abeaut tunes, an' he *is* a numb-customer 'at cawn't count six-eights or two-fours in a bar when he's plenty o' rattlin clogs to keep him steady. Aw'd to give th' job up for want o' memory. Reaunt dances were weel enough, but when it coome to th' first set or th' Caledonians aw geet gravell't middlin soon. Between times th' professor gav us exhibitions o' figure dancin, his scholars sittin reaund oppen-meauthed, gawpin at his twinklin feet, an' lookin wi despair at their own cumbersome clogs. It were said he used to punce his wife wi thoose nimble toes ov his; but we cawn't believe o th' tales we yer flyin abeaut i' th' world, an' iv he *did* show us a fiery temper sometimes there's no need to wondher, considherin what rough members we were to manage.

Bi baggin time we'd had enough seet-seein, an' wondher't what to finish th' day wi. Aw mention't a good stage play advertised for that neet, but Ben said that were nowt—he could see sich things awom. He were too weary for ony moore walkin, sittin on th' pier were nowt, gooin to th' swimmin bath performance were nowt, th' singin reawms were nowt—otogether th' owd brid were in a nowty humour.

"Come!" aw said, "there's like no plezin thee to-neet. Wilta go wi me a seein Sam Laycock?"

"Why, does *he* live here? Aw ne'er knew that afore."

"Oh ah! Sam's nobbut had bad health, so he coome here nearly five-an'-twenty year sin' to thry iv th' saybreeze could mend him. Beside, he finds it a dyel yezzier writin poethry at th' sayside nor wheere he's nobbut dirt reaund him."

"Well, aw've often thought aw could like to see th' chap 'at wrote 'Welcome, bonny brid,' an' 'Quality Row.' An' dost myen to say tha con find him here?"

"Aw think so. Put thi cap on an' we'll look."

We went to Sam's heause an' axed for him. His wife said he'd gwone to th' barber's an' wouldn't be mony minutes; so we waited, an' th' poet coome in dhirectly, sthrokin his long grey byert.

"Well, well!" he said, wi a little dhrawl 'at marks his talk, takkin us in wi one glint ov his sharp brid-like e'en. "Are yo com'n at last? Aw expected yo before this. Josef sent me word yo were comin. Is this a friend?"

"One o' mi owdest. Ben's nowt mich to look at, an he's noane gifted wi a Roman nose same as us, but his friendship stons wear betther nor Rachda flannel or rope beltin."

"Well, well! Aw conna swagger mich abeaut beauty misel. Come up stairs, do, an' let's have a crack. Heaw *is* Josef?"

Punce, kick. *Byert*, beard.

"He's ill. Th' poor fellah forgeet to wind his blind deawn t'other neet, so he's getten a bad cowd an' a cough—summat he's noane bin used to."

"Yo dunna tell me so! One would ha thowt, neaw, there were hardly enough for a cowd to festen on. Well, well!"

We followed th' poet upstairs into his snug sittin-reawm, hung reaund wi picthers presented to him bi his Owdham friends, two good porthraits ov hissel, a copy o' th' "Village Weddin," a framed addhress fro his Stalybridge admirers, a likeness o' Ned Waugh, an' so on. There's a fine photograph on th' mantelpiece, showin Laycock an' Ben Brierley sittin at a table wi th' say at their backs; an' for once i' mi life aw felt tempted to steighl when aw seed it. A writin desk stons i' th' floor middle, a weel-filled stond o' book-shelves an' a piano tak up nooks lift an' reet o' th' fireplace; so Sam's writin, readin, an' music tackle ready to his honds just as he wants 'em.

"Aw've just bin gettin powed," Sam went on. "Sit yo deawn an' smooke a cigarette wi me. Yo'll get nowt to sup, becose aw'm a teetotaller."

Ben's face lengthen't a bit at that, but he sattl't hissel deawn, sayin nowt.

"Yo'n noane bin o'er to Rachda latly," aw said.

"Nowe, nowe! Aw have bin o'er at times to give readins, yo know, but not lately. Nowe! One readin's to pay for yet beside."

"Nay, yo don't myen that!" says Ben. "Why, that's a stonnin disgrace to th' teawn! Aren't yo a Stalybridge chap?"

"Aw were born at Marsden."

"What, Marsden i' Yokshire? Well, aw'll be hanged! Heaw con yo for shame to write Lancashire dialect?"

"Aw conna tell," Sam laughed; "aw'm sure aw conna. But it's late to start blamin me for that crime."

"There's no blame abeaut it," Ben says. "Yo'n done honour to th' owd lingo. Why, bless yor heart, Misther Laycock, aw've had some o' yor songs i' mi yead above thirty year!"

"Well, it may be so. Aw havena mich opinion misel o' mi writins, but someway they done seem to stick."

"Aw should think so! Heawever mony poems han yo made i' yor time?"

"Abeaut four hundherd moore or less," Sam said, makin Ben's meauth fly oppen wi wondher. Then th' poet oppen't his desk, took eaut two pen-an'-ink dhrawins, an' said,

"These are views o' Marsden, an' this is my birthplace."

"Is it stonnin yet?" aw axed, as we looked wi intherist at th' weel-finished sketches.

"It is, aw believe, but aw dunna think it's tenanted neaw. What would yo think sthruck me most abeaut that cottage th' last time aw went to see it?"

We could noather on us guess.

"What would yo think neaw?"

"Nay!" Ben says, "there's no reckonin yo poets up. Yo con see things where there is nowt."

"What done yo say to th' owd reausty dur-sneck? When aw set mi thumb on it to oppen th' cottage dur, that sneck brought mony a tendher thowt into mi mind. Aw could see misel again a toddlin lad, reachin up above mi yead to press that bit o' reausty metal. Aw could see th' empty kitchen fill again wi th' forms o' thoose aw loved. Aw kneel't again at mi mother's knee to say mi simple prayers, lookin up into her face shinin i' th' fireleet like th' face ov an angel, an' o mi childish fancies coome creawdin back. Well, well! Aw brought th' owd sneck away, an' wrote some lines abeaut it, an' yo conna buy it for what it weighs i' gowd."

Ben coughed an' blew his nose, muttherin summat abeaut bacca-smooke gettin into his e'en.

"Aw'm fain to yer 'at yo're comfortably off i' yor owd days, Sam," aw said. "Yo'n done betther nor most poets."

"Aw'm very thankful, very! Aw've had rough sailin i' mi time, had a deal o' sickness to feight, an' known what poverty means sadly too weel. But mi wants were awlus little, yo know, an' so we've weathered th' storm an' anchored here in a safe an' shelthered harbour. There's few happier folks nor me, friends. Aw sit here in mi quiet room mony an heaur a day, readin mi books, or just thinkin to misel; turnin eaut for a walk when aw feel to want a change. Then i' summertime aw thravel a deal—into Wales, or among th' lakes, an' aw conna see what moore th' richest mon alive could buy."

"Happen a contented mind's summat to do wi it," aw said.

"Well, that may be so."

"Aw guess yo keepen writin yet?" Ben axed.

"Just a bit, just a bit. Sometimes a thowt comes into mi mind, makin me restless till it's put into shape. But that's seldom neaw—seldom. One o' these days aw'm thinkin to improve some o' mi early pieces."

"What! Yo wain't awther 'em, will yo?" Ben axed.

"Well, well! One con see certain things i' lookin back. There's 'Bowton's Yard,' neaw, for one. Tak that verse abeaut th' owd cobbler:—

'At number nine th' owd cobbler lives—th' owd chap 'at mends mi shoon,
He's gettin very weak an' done—he'll ha to leave us soon;
He reads his Bible every day, an' sings just like a lark;
He says he's practisin for heaven—he's welly done his wark.'

Neaw it seems to me there's a break in th' sense i' that last line—

Dur-sneck, door latch.

it hardly flows as aw should like it. There's that word 'welly,' too, It's very owd-fashion't, yo know, an' doesna seaund so weel."

"Let it a-be, do!" Ben says. "Aw've recited that piece mony a time, an' wouldn't have it awther't for nowt."

"Aw may change mi mind yet," Sam said studyin. "Aw've hardly decided what to do." He turned to me. "What would *yo* advise?"

"Same as Ben. Let yor wark ston—no petchin up con mend it. Beside, it's public property, yo known; an' yo may depend on it th' owd words 'll last, heawever mich yo may awther 'em."

"Aw conna just satisfy misel. But aw'll think o' what yo've said, an' may very likely tak yor advice yet."

"Yo'll make a mistake iv yo dunnot," aw said. "Aw con quite undherstond 'at yor fine ear's never satisfied wi yor lines, but very few folk are so sensitive. Yor fame's made an' sattl't—let it rest. Yo'll keep everybody's honour an' respect whol yo're alive, an' afther yo're dyead—may that be mony a long year off—aw con tell yo what'll happen, iv yo'll let me awther some o' yor own verses.

Creawds o' friends, 'at 's long loved thee so dear,
To that spot where tha'rt buried will throng;
An' they'll say wi sad looks, 'Th' owd poet lies here,
Let's sing him a nice little song.'

Then they'll deck thi green grave wi wild fleawrs,
Pat it closer to keep thee reet warm:
An' they'll say as they leave thee alone a few heawrs,
'Bless th' owd fellow, he's takkin no harm.'"

"Yo have it o planned aw hear," Sam said, wi his oppen smile. "But aw'm i' no great hurry to be patted close, yet. Nowe, nowe! Life's a precious gift, an' not to be thrown heedless away. Yo remind me neaw o' Shirley's poem abeaut death. Aw'll read it for yo."

He geet a little book off his shelf an' read these fine verses in a clear voice, givin expression to every point an' shade o' feelin.

"The glories of our blood and state
Are shadows—not substantial things;
There is no armour against fate;
Death lays his icy hand on kings:
Sceptre and crown
Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crooked scythe and spade:

Some men with swords may reap the field,
And plant fresh laurels where they kill;
But their strong nerves at last may yield;
They tame but one another still:
Early or late
They stoop to fate,
And must give up their murmuring breath
When they, pale captives, creep to death.

The garlands wither on your brow;
Then boast no more your mighty deeds;
Upon Death's purple altar now
See where the victor-victim bleeds:
Your heads must come
To the cold tomb;
Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet, and blossom in their dust."

VI.

Aw darsay that's very grand," Ben says, gapin. "Heaw is it these greight poets are olez thinkin abeaut their latther ends? Just read us one o' yor own, Misther Laycock, afore we gwone. Aw con undherston *yor* wark, shuzheaw. Heaw did yo larn to write poethry?"

"Yo're axin me summat neaw," Sam said. "As far as aw con bring to mind mi first lines were scribbl't on a cop-ticket somewheere about th' year 1850. Then aw wrote a little bit o' both sides, an' kept on practisin when th' humour took me."

He read us two or three pieces. One began,

"Thank God for o these bonny fleawers
At groo abeaut one's feet!
For th' silv'ry moon an' th' million stars
'At shoine aboon at neet!
For rain an' dew, for sun an' shade,
An' th' stormy winds 'at blow!
For rays o' hope, an' snacks o' bliss,
An' drops o' grief an' o."

Another were a humorous piece, blowin th' Atlantic up for misbehavin itsel an' weshin barrowfuls o' shingle onto Sam's durstep, startin off i' this style:

"Aw tell thee what, friend, tha's bin carryin on strangely;
Tha's bin on for a bit of a marlock, aw think,
An' tha seems eaut o humour wi summat or other;
What's to do wi thee, loike? Hast bin havin some drink?"

Another were aimed at a parson 'at'd preighched a sarmon to show th' influenza were sent as a judgment. Sam sets abeaut his ribs i' fine style, knocks o his notions to smithereens, an' finishes up so:

"God is'nt a fiend, inventin pains;
A tyrant, bindin slaves i' chains;
Nor castin blight i' fertile plains,
Becose He's vex't;
No! 'God is good;' we see His peawers
I' woods an' streams, i' fields an' fleawrs;
This pratty world we live in's eawrs,
An' so is th' next."

"Yo don't seaund to have mich opinion o' parsons," Ben said, wi a laugh. "Yo're as bad as me."

"They want watchin. Yo see they're under-worked an' o'er-paid, an' that's dangerous. Aw meet wi very few fit to howd th' places they fill."

"Aw could find yo one," aw said. "What qualities done yo look for in a good parson?"

"Nay, that needs thought! He should have clear judgment, brode views, an' a warm heart, middlin o' scholarship wi wit enough to use it reet; he should be gam to buckle to at hard practical wark, an' a personal friend ov everybody in his parish; his hond should olez be oppen when charity's wanted, so he should have a good wage an' spend it weel. Wi thoose points a chap met pass."

"They're good enough points," aw said, "though few folk 'at thried to follow 'em close could live mony year, an' it's noane fair to set that standhard up as th' average. But aw know one 'at onswers to everything yo mention, an' moore. He left a big wage for a less, an' gies most o' that away. He's a fine scholar, but con use his brains just as iv he'd no larnin to sweigh 'em deawn. Aw've known him set forty bigwigs at defiance, knockin 'em into two score cocked-hats wi one sweep ov his pen, an' yerd him apologise to a little dirty arrand-lad becose he'd kept th' young imp waitin five minutes. One day he stons preighchin, i' London or Oxford, to congregations o' brains, brass, an' breedin; another time yo'll see him hurryin through slutch an' stink to visit some clemmin or sickly mon or woman in a leausy cellar hole. He keeps his heause for other folk to use, an' feeds everybody 'at comes. He cuts his creed to suit Christ's religion, lookin clear-e'ed into th' soul o' things, an' never dhrems o' squeezin th' life eaut o' religion to make it fit th' narrow coffin ov a creed. He talks to full-groon folk or little babbies wi th' same yez, an' everybody 'at yers him once wants to goo again. He couldn't tell a lie iv he wanted ——"

"Give o'er! Give o'er!" Sam co'd eaut, breighkin my catalogue off. "Iv there *is* sich a parson livin—an' aw'm forced to deaubt it—he mun have everybody's good word 'at comes near him."

"Nay, not he! some folk reckon nowt mich on him."

"That's sthrange!"

"Happen so; but it's simple enough to undherston, an' nathural enough too. Short-seeted folk 'at cawn't look across his wide-reighchin mind are like to be blynt to his greight aims. Never dhremin on what a wide an' deep feaundation o' thruth an' sense he's buildin up his church, they'll blame him for not co'in to see 'em once a week, for bein to busy to cackle smo talk wi 'em, for gettin too thick wi chapel-goers, for havin his pews too creawded, for neglectin important jobs to chatther science or classics wi his scholars, an' plenty moore sich rags an' scraps o'

faurt-findin—as iv *he* didn't know hissel what's important an' what isn't. It matthers not a button, Sam, heaw noble a mon's mind is nor heaw blameless his life—fleas 'll bite him ! What happen't to St. Paul when he started preighchin brode religion an' sensible ways o' livin ?"

"He geet stones cobbed at him," Sam said, quietly.

"Well, stone-throwin's against th' law just neaw ; but ony bowd an' thrue mon aimin to blend th' little differences o' religious feelin into some rezonable agreement con very soon make plenty ov enemies yet ; an' iv wi summat ov a poet's e'e he looks twenty year afore him, sthrivin to give th' world a shove forrad, he'll find hissel i' wur throuble again."

"This is very dhry talk," Ben says. "There's nowt in it, an' time's gettin on too. Surelee tha's lecthur't us enough for one neet. We mun be shappin for off."

"We mun for sure," aw said, smoothin mi ruffl't fithers, laughin at misel to find heaw warm aw'd getten o'er mi talk ; so we jumped up, bid good neet to Sam, an' made off wom, managin to sleep whol dayleet beaut havin to get up to feed.

Next mornin were very wet, wi signs o' thunner, but we started off for a walk, an' londed i' Poulton toard noon, afther ramblin through a lot o' green lones an' fields.

Neaw in that owd-fashion't little teawn aw've a friend co'd Stephen Crossley 'at used to be a schoomaisther, an' so knows a lot. We rooted him up, fund him smookin an' readin i' what he co's his study, following th' fashion these college chaps han o' kessenin their play-reawms, an' tempted him eautside to show us reaund a bit.

Th' fresh air made him cough, for he seldom stirs eaut, likin betther to ceawer in his arm-cheer wi a mouldy book undher his nose ; but afther practisin a bit he geet used to th' wynt, an' shapped to seauk it in beaut damage.

Stephen's a long gawky chap wi a pimpl't face ; an' like tuthri moore of his thrade he knows plenty o' facts, but shows little knack o' gettin use or plezur eaut ov his knowledge. He were a good while lookin for his e'eglasses an' glooves afore he'd start, an' it sthruck me as quare he should want sich tackle to turn eaut in when he didn't use it a wom ; but wi time an' patience we geet him across th' durstep, past th' owd Bull aleheause, into th' cobble-paved market square.

We looked at th' stocks, stone column an' whippin-stoop, admired th' ancient heause fronts, sniffed th' owd-world cobwebby savvour 'at feels to hang abeaut theere, an' then turned off for a walk through t' counthry, to get a squint reaund th' neighbour-hood.

We'd to make back afore long, freeten't ov a sthrong sheawer, for th' sky put a very black sulky look on an' some big dhrops o' weet fell.

"Aw thought it'd oather rain or brast in a bit," Ben says. "Phew! it's warm! Wi this flat lond o' reaund us we're like geese dancin on a wot oon-plate."

"Ha, ha!" Stephen laughed in a dignified cackle. "A most remarkable simile, upon my word! I think no such figure of speech would ever have occurred to me."

"Aw don't think it would," Ben says, very dhry, for he'd soon fund eaut Stephen were noane o'er-weighted wi noather fancy nor humour. "Does it occur to yo 'at a good aleheause met be useful for hawve-an-heaur whol this thunner blows o'er?"

Crossley took th' hint an' soon londed us in one o' th' comicalest shops ever aw seed. It stons near th' church, an' looks like a divin-bell reared again a pigeon-cote, a thick coverin o' thatch roofin o in. We geet inside wi some bendin an' dodgin undher bare byems, t' schoomaisther's silk hat showin itsel badly i' th' road, an' fund two reawms like ship cabins, wi a kitchen tacked on behinnd.

Aw sperred off th' lonlord iv he wouldn't rayther have a good slate o'er his yead, nor a bundle o' sodden sthraw.

"No," he says. "I wouldn't like to disturb th' old thatch. It's been taken care on bi my family for four generations, an' we wont put it out o' t' rooad now. It's cool i' summer an' warm i' winter, an' satisfies us well, though it comes expensive to keep right and sound."

There's olez summat comfortable abeaut these owd-fashion't heauses. Whether it's becose th' woles are built so thick, or owin to th' air bein charged wi some exthract fro long years o' good livin an' leet-hearted fun, or becose yo mostly find dacent folk keepin sich places an' bringin eaut good meight an' dhrink, aw don't reckon to sattle; but th' fact is so, past a deaubt.

Rain fell fast eautside, swillin again th' steaut woles 'at shelthered us, but little we cared for rain or wynt. We'd no fear o' gettin weet, packed inside that solid masonwark. Pipes coome eaut, ale were co'd for, an heaur flew afore we'd time to miss it.

We yerd 'at one o' th' church ringers lived theere, so we axed for him, fund him a sociable young chap, an' persuaded him to borrow th' church keigh an' show us reaund when t' weather cleared up. That happened afore long. Th' heavy rain stopped, t' thunner-shocks rowlt away fur north, owd Sol showed his breet face again, like a policeman peepin eaut afther a row's o'er.

We walked across to th' church, a little grey-stone, square-teawer't buildin. This teawer seems owdher nor t'other part, an' it's noane finished stonnin yet, for th' woles are good four feet thick. Ben said somebry mut ha rear't it soon afther t' Flood, an' wanted to make sure it wouldn't be swilled away; but another Rachda chap 'at's bin preawlin abeaut that neighbourhood, an'

Oon-plate, oven-plate.

con talk wi moore authority nor Ben, puts it nearer th' Civil War time. He's shown us some samples o' th' churchwardens' accounts, too—sichlike as these:

		s.	d.
1764, July	8.—To a bottle of wine to a strange parson	2	6
1765, Oct.	20.—Mr. Loxham, for a prayer	0	2
Dec.	25.—Spent receiving parson	1	6
1774, July	4.—Spent on Parson Eccleston and another strange parson—one read prayers and the other preached	3	6
1805, June	9.—To expenses to Church Town, when John Santer, clerk, convicted himself in getting drunk, and Timothy Swarbrick for making him drunk (when they were fined each 5s.)	1	6

John should ha minded betther nor so; but it were happen a dhry summer, an' it's evident Timothy were havin a marlock at th' clerk's expense.

Parsons were chep a hundherd year sin, seeminly, when folk could get two at once for 1/9 apiece; an' prayers at twopence con hardly be reckoned dear. Prices han gwone up sin' thoose days.

We turned in at th' belfry dur an' climbed up some dark windin steps, where we felt like midges crawlin up a narrow corkscrew. There's six bells, packed together into very little reawm, lookin wi their wood wheels like a lot ov hond spinnin jennies.

We hearken't a short lecthur on bell-ringin, wi a separate histhory ov every bell theere; then, climbin tuthri moore steps, we geet eautside onto th' flat teawer top, an' fund o' th' Fylde lyin undher us level an' pratty. Fro Fleetwood to Preston, fro Blackpool to Bleasdale Moors, wondherin e'en con range, findin beauty on o sides; for iv this flat counthry's less romantic an' brokken nor some it's noane wantin i' good looks ov it own, an' aw'll guarantee it to be betther for walkin o'er nor havin so mony broos to climb.

Aw wondher iv Milton ever crawl't up to that church top. Iv he didn't where did he see this?—

> "Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
> While the landscape round it measures;
> Russet lawns, and fallows grey,
> Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
> Mountains, on whose barren breast
> The labouring clouds do often rest,
> Meadows trim, with daisies pied,
> Shallow brooks and rivers wide."

Broo, brow, a steep slope.

VII.

"Iv we'd nobbut a telescope we could see o' t' road wom, aw do believe!" Ben said. "Sithee at owd Wyre, here, wandherin o'er th' sond as unconsarn't as iv nowt were! Aw ne'er felt so stuck up i' mi life!"

Th' air were clear an' fresh afther t' storm, an' a warm, damp smell rose fro th' weet swilled meadows, shinin clen an' breet.

"Pilling Moss lies over here," Stephen said, sthretchin his long arm toard t' north. "Seagulls breed there in immense numbers. Yonder is Weeton, with its Roman road and British cairns; and Kirkham, where the Thirty Sworn Men used to sit in council. Over here, more to the south, is Wrea Green, where the Ribble can be forded to Hesketh Bank. They have a free school at Wrea Green, endowed by a working tailor."

"He were betther off nor most journeymen," aw said.

"Tradition says his wages were fourpence a day in addition to food."

"Then he mun ha bin a teetotaller," Ben says, "an' th' first ever aw yerd on among tailors. But o honour to him, whatever he were. Larnin's a good linin for ony mak o' yeads."

"Many old customs linger in these villages," t' schoomaisther went on, happen fain to air his knowledge a bit. "The inhabitants are a primitive race of people, not above believing in ghosts or practising magic on All Hallows night. Here in Poulton, even, we still ring the curfew bell."

"The dickens yo done!" aw co'd eaut, capped for once i' mi life at ony rate. "That's a corker! Why that custom mun be eight hundherd year owd."

"Yes. William the Conqueror instituted it, and he ascended the throne in 1066, at the age of thirty-eight, dying in 1087."

Aw turned to th' ringer, axin heaw this curfew were rung, an' he towd us as weel as he could.

"We ring it on the tenor bell. First we raise it and then lower it, if you know enough of ringing to understand that."

"Nay!" aw said, "ringin talk's o Chinese to me, an' likely to stop so. Aw know too mony languages neaw, an' aw'll spend what tuthri year aw may have left i' thryin to larn wit."

He set too, then, explainin heaw th' bell swung in it frame, heaw sometimes it went "Tong!" an' othersome "Tingle-ingle!" but aw couldn't gawm it.

"As it happens aw've bin readin o'er Conquerin Billy this last week or two," Ben said to th' schoomaisther. "Aw've fund him eaut. Tell us what yo known abeaut him."

So Crossley set to, givin us a long list o' names, dates, an' facts, wi no moore feelin or imagination abeaut 'em nor could be crommed into a nutshell.

"Ah!" Ben gaped when th' lesson were o'er. "Yo known a lot, but yor talk's very dhry."

"You will find my statements accurate."

"Oh! aw don't dispute that. Yo're particlar to a shade, different to Sim o' th' Brook when he whiteweshed his garden rails becose he were eaut o' green paint. Aw'm noane to a year or so misel, nor o'er anxious to measure things up to th' sixteent ov an inch, but aw could paint a wicker likeness o' Billy nor yo're shappin to do."

"Proceed then, by all means," Crossley said, lookin as iv he expected havin some sport. "But endeavour to be correct in your statements."

So we sit deawn on th' battlements like three bantams on a rail, an' Ben started yardin off.

"Neaw," he says, "what mak ov a brid *were* this greight sodier-king? Aw con tell yo, an' bowdly. He were a short, fat, pompious chap, wi plenty o' muscle; so snappy-temper't 'at nobry durst speighk to him hardly, so ill-marred as to want everything he seed, so thoughtless ov other folk 'at he desarved dhreawnin. He hadn't even law-reet to his fayther's name, though it's hardly fair to blame him for that—an' it's abeaut th' only thing connected wi him 'at aw cawn't find faurt wi."

"Come, tha'rt gooin it!" aw put in, as he stopped to fot breath. "Aw s' begin thinkin tha'rt noane so fond on him afore long."

"Noane so fond on him! Fond ov a mon 'at could use folk as he did? It were Billy 'at passed th' forest laws, doomin a chap to have his e'en plucked eaut for deer steighlin. Another time some ov his own rapscallions rose against him, so he cut 'em a foot apiece off. Then he bored a hole slap through another chap wi a wotyel. What mak o' wark's that?"

"You must consider the habits of those barbarous days."

"Habits be hanged! Iv it'd bin yor foot yo'd a wanted to keep it on, iv it'd bin as thick wi corns as nicks in a thimble, shuz what time o' th' day it happen't to be. There's no scuse for a chap carryin on so. Why! weren't it th' same vagabond 'at laid o Yokshire bare wi red steel an' blazin faggot? An' heaw abeaut that New Forest job—sweepin every bit o' property into rack an' ruin fro Winchesther to th' sayside? Aw tell yo th' fayberry-e'ed scamp cared for nowt but gam-presarvin an' gettin everything into his fingers! Look when he dee'd—that shows! He'd to lie ever so long afore onybody'd pike him up—so fond they were on him! Like o sich bullyraggers he mostly geet his own road whol he were livin, an' cost no tears when he gave o'er."

"Why, Ben!" aw said, chucklin at him, "tha'rt gettin thisel into a rare tanthrum abeaut nowt."

"Nowt?" Ben axed, disgusted. "Dost co that nowt?"

Wotyel, an iron rod or spindle made red-hot.

"Nowt at o! Billy's dyead, an' it matthers not a button to us what he did—we should ha bin weighvers onyheaw."

"Well, it's summat iv that's nowt," Ben grunted. "Aw'm loath to think it ov an owd friend, but aw raylee deaubt tha'rt loisin intherist i' greight questions. Let's be gettin toard wom again iv tha'rt for makin thisel disagreeable. Iv tha'd happen't to live i' one o' th' cottages Billy's sodiers brunt—londin wom i' th' dinner-heaur, happen, to find thi thatch blazin, thi wife an' childher yeawlin i' th' croft, o' thi bits o' pots an' sticks mashed up—tha'd ha thought it summat, *aw'll* bet! What say'n yo, schoomaisther?"

"You appear to have a somewhat vivid conception of history. These facts have not presented themselves to my mind before in precisely the same way. I must inform you, however, that imagination is a dangerous faculty to indulge, very often running away with our more solid reasoning and calculating powers."

"Ne'er mind abeaut that," Ben said. "It's noane likely to run away wi *yo*, that's one comfort—yo're raythor too solid for owt o' that mak. What art studyin o'er, owd oysther?"

He fot me a slap on th' back, so aw said,

"Aw were nobbut just thinkin heaw yezzy it is to blacken a chap's charicther; speshly when he's dyead an' cawn't talk back. Iv Billy could speighk for hissel he'd soon put a different look on these things tha'rt 'busin him for."

"Aw could happen plez misel whether aw believed him or not," Ben mutther't. "He'd have his finger to weet afore aw took his word for mich."

"Well, there's two things he desarves credit for, an' iv he'd ne'er done nowt else woth mentionin thoose two should be enough to keep him i' memory. He made a registher ov o th' lond in his kingdom, an' it's a theausan pities thoose 'at coome afther him didn't follow that good example."

"There's a lot o' young turnies i' Rachda 'at wain't agree wi' that," Ben says. "Tha'rt for takkin th' biggest slice o' their livins off 'em at a slap. But aw s' ne'er believe Billy had wit enough to think o' that cliver dodge hissel. Somebry towd him."

"We're sure it couldn't be done beaut his knowledge an' consent, shuzheaw; so let him have his share o' th' credit."

"And what other creditable act do you attribute to him?" Crossley axed, ready to dhrop heavy on mi corns iv aw made a slip, an' feelin, no deaubt, iv we'd nobbut his stores o' fact we *met* talk."

"He invented magisthrates."

"What credit is there abeaut that?" Ben axed, laughin. "Set three cotton maisthers to judge a doffer, an' see what'll happen."

'Busin, abusing.

Doffer, lad employed in a cotton mill to doff or remove the full bobbins from the throstle frame and replace them by empty ones.

"Set three doffers to settle a cotton maisther," aw said, "an' see what'll happen *then*. Aw tell thee King Billy did weel to invent thoose useful self-actin mindhers, an' little as he thought it were plannin for th' comfort o' thee an' me to-day. So heaw neaw, Misther Benjamin."

"Give o'er, do!" Ben said. "Iv we gwone on at this rate tha'll be thracin policemen back to th' Conquest, or some sich twaddle."

"There'd be little throuble abeaut that. Billy invented Justices—Justices patented watchmen—policemen are nobbut watchmen pipeclayed an' polished. Crossley here con give thee facts an' dates in a crack to show th' connection."

"Unquestionably I can," says Crossley, jumpin at sich a chance o' showin off his larnin, plappin away for twenty minutes abeaut Sir Robert Peel, Magna Charta, Common Pleas, Court Leets, an' o' maks. He'd very likely ha bin gooin on yet iv we'd letten him, but Ben broke him off."

"Yo're weel up, maisther," he says, "but con yo tell me heaw thoose courts coome to be co'd leet when th' officers are olez sich steaut heavy weel-fed chaps?"

T' schoomaisther stared, lost t' thread of his tale, an' gav it up, just what Ben had wanted him to do, so we scrambl't deawn th' windin stairs again, looked reaund th' church, fund eaut 'at th' organist were blint Renshaw fro Rachda teawn, an' then went back to th' divin bell for some baggin.

They brought us ham an' eggs wi sallet thrimmins, an' wi made shift wi that for once, as th' turtle an' venison were off.

"Eh!" Ben says, when his appetite slacken't a bit, "this pig-flesh reminds me ov a tale abeaut some stown bacon."

"Howd on!" aw said. "No tales! We made a bargain, recollect!"

"Aw mun just tell yo this—it's nobbut a little un, an' we're beaun wom to-morn."

"By all means let us have the story," Stephen put in.

"Well," aw said, "have thi own stupid road, Ben; but think on it's at thi own responsibility this conthract's brokken, an' tha mun ston o law charges, hereditaments, an' consequences o' that mak."

"Gullook! Well, this happen't i' Lower Shore a good while sin'. There used to be a barber theere 'at dabbl't i' magic, an' were reckon't a bit ov a witch. Aw forget his name—co him Lother. One o' th' neighbours had a side o' bacon stown, so th' barber were applied to for help.

'Heaw long had this bacon bin cured?' he axed, when he'd yerd th' case laid deawn, so th' neighbour towd him they'd nobbut just getten it eaut o' th' saut.

'Which side o' th' kitchen were it hung on—lift or reet?'

'Why,' th' neighbour said, considherin, 'that like depends which road yo're stonnin. Iv yo stood facin th' fire it'd be on th' reet side.'

'Ah! Hum! Just so!' th' wizart says, wi a finger to his foryead. 'Yo happen didn't notice what angle it made bi th' north star?'

'Not aw indeed. We just hung th' flitch up an' left it. Aw know nowt abeaut angles, an' aw'm fast what pigs han to do wi th' stars.'

'Ah! Oh! Quite so!' th' wizart says, lookin as fawse as he could. 'Aw'll consult mi magic glass.'

This were a square o' lookin glass he kept to carry on his dodgin thricks; so he looked, but could see nowt nobbut hissel.

'Yo mun co again in abeaut an heaur an' thirteen minutes,' he said. 'Th' spirits are noane just ready, an' aw'd betther have a private conference wi 'em.'

So th' neighbour went off. Just as he geet to th' dur Lother co'd afther him in a very unconsarn't style,

'Who doesta suspect?'

'Nay!' th' chap says; 'aw coome here a-larnin that for owt as aw knew.'

'Oh! Um! Ah!' th' barber said. 'There's summat i' that. Co again! Co again!'

Afther a while th' neighbour co'd, an' Lother said he'd fund t' thief. He dursen't tell his name, but th' scamp should brun afore midneet shuz who he were.

Well, this were o reaund th' village in hawve-an-heaur, for plenty were waitin to know what th' conjuror met say. T' thief yerd th' news among t' other folk, an' started itchin first thing. He were an owd chap on th' moorend, an' were thinkin o' gettin his wife to fry a collop o' th' stown pig for their suppers. His itchin geet wur, an' he broke into a cowd sweat.

'It mun be a rash comin eaut,' he said to his wife. 'Aw ne'er felt this road afore.'

'Eh, iv it *should* be thrue tha'rt witched!' th' owd woman said. 'Tha did tak th' bacon, tha knows.'

'Aw darn't chance it,' th' rogue says, thremblin, turnin up his sleeve an' findin his arm grooin red. 'Tak th' bacon wom again, Mary, for it's nobbut nine o' t' clock, an' aw'm wottenin bi neaw.'"

Stephen didn't see th' joke, an' we ne'er bother't explainin it to him. We kept him company a while an' then slipped back to Blackpool bi thrain, finishin th' holiday up wi a quiet neet awom.

Firth went back to Preston that neet, wur eaut o' love wi teetotalism nor ever, makin us laugh to see a chap so discontented becose he were doin weel.

Wottenin, growing hotter and hotter.

"I can't stand this any longer," he said at partin. "I'm determined to start in business again if it costs me every penny I have. But for the invention of printing, Ben Franklin's wise saws, and this confoundedly appetising climate I should have been a happy man. As it is I am a wreck."

We wished him weel, thinkin he looked i' tidy fettle, wrecked or not, an' seed no moore on him.

VIII.

When we geet up next mornin Ben brasted two buttons off his singlet wi thryin to festen it.

"Come!" aw said, "It's as weel we're beaun wom again, or tha'd want some tucks lettin eaut o' thi clooas. Dost feel ony betther for thi holiday?"

"Well, aw think there's happen some improvement on th' whol, but aw wish this skin wouldn't keep pillin off mi nose. Aw'm brunt to th' colour ov owd mahogany very near."

"Ne'er mind," aw said. "Tha'll soon be white again when we getten to Rachda. We s' noather get sunbrunt nor o'er-groon theere. Aw believe we'n gained abeaut hawve-a-stone weight apiece this week; so whether there's owt here or nowt we're takkin moore back wi us nor we brought."

Ben looked at me raythер sheepish as he thried to make his jacket meet reaund his middle, but he'd to give it up—th' button wouldn't catch bi hawve-an-inch.

"Lev it loase," aw said. "Tha'll festen it yezzy enough in a day or two. Arta feelin as hungry as ever?"

"Aw could eight a three-legged stoo very near. Let's see iv yon breakfast's ready yet."

So we went deawn, fund a weel-filled table, an left it as bare as Mother Hubbart's shelf.

"We'll just slip deawn an' have a word wi yon gipsies afore we gwone wom, Ben," aw said when th' breakfast were ended. "It'll put time on as weel as owt."

"Nay!" Ben grunted, "there's nowt woth gooin for. They're nobbut a lot ov idle, dirty scamps 'at'll pay noather rent nor taxes. Dost want thi fortin tellin or summat?"

"Nowe; mine's towd long sin. Tha knows nowt abeaut these wandherin folk, aw yer, or tha'd have moore respect for their wit. Idle or not, they'n sense enough to live undher th' oppen sky, shap beaut docthors, an' keep theirsel wiçk whol they getten to be a hundherd year owd. Tha's never studied their lingo aw reckon?"

"Aw raylee wondher what tha'll ax me next," Ben said, fillin his pipe. "Iv aw haven't enough wark to addle a livin it's a pity, beaut makin mi yead mazy wi sich gibberidge as that."

"Dost know John Bunyan were a gipsy?"

"Ger off!"

"He said hissel, 'My father's house was of that rank which is meanest and most despised of all the families of the land.' What con that myen but gipsies? Beside, he were a tinker, and that's enough to sattle it."

"Give o'er!" Ben co'd eaut. "Tha's olez some mak o' foolishness i' thi yead. Talk abeaut summat else."

"Come thee on," aw said. "Aw'm curious to see iv this gang's what it reckons to be or nobbut a makeshift. Come an' yer me talk Romany to 'em—it'll make thi yure curl."

"Tha con talk Smobridge to 'em happen. Iv tha con make thisel undherstood bi these folk i' their own cackle aw'll gallantee to buy thee ——"

"Be careful, neaw!"

"To buy thee—to buy—well! say hawve-an-eaunce o' funeral bacca."

"Done!" aw said, clappin him on th' back. "It's a bargain! Iv yon are gradely gipsies aw'll enchant thi ears wi discourse, an' like a fairy make thee twirl abeaut yon sondy green. Why, mon! aw could olez patther tinker's shelta an' slang ov Egypt fro mi youth up. It'll be five-an'-twenty year sin' aw read George Borrow's quare books, but they're fast fixed i' mi yead yet. Aw con see his wild scholar muttherin Sanscrit on London Bridge or sittin at his baggin i' th' dingle when he'd knocked th' big tinker's e'en up an' stown his sweetheart. See him! Ah! As plain as iv aw'd met him yestherday. There's no moore life-like figures to be fund i' English writins nor owd George's."

"Well, it may be as tha reckons," says Ben; "but be it so or be it sonot aw carenot a button shank. Come on, iv tha'rt for gooin."

We started for t' Seauth Shore, londed among th' sond hills, an' ploughed forrad to th' gipsy camp. We passed a chap wi summat ov a rovin look abeaut him, playin wi a dog, an' Ben gav me a nudge.

"This is one on 'em," he whisper't. "Have a shot at him."

So aw stopped an' said, "Sar shan?" to th' fellah.

"Eh!" he says, lookin up.

"That seems a tidy jookal. He's a cooshko yok."

Th' chap geet mad abeaut summat o in a minute. "I'll tell you what it is, old party," says he, puttin a doubl't fist close to mi nose-end; "if you give me any more of this bloomin kid I'll bloomin well knock your bloomin head off!"

He turned away wi th' dog at his heels, levin Ben brastin wi laughin, an' me feelin potther't a bit, thinkin to misel they were noane o Egyptians 'at could be fund on gipsy greaund.

"Ne'er mind, owd brid!" Ben said, hardenin me on to make a bigger foo o' misel. "There's a lass comin neaw 'at's gipsy enough. Look at her fine eardhrops an' gowd rings! Thry again."

"Let me tell your fortunes, pretty gentlemen," th' young woman said, comin up to us, lookin as fine as a queen in her green silk frock an' breet-colour't shawl. "I can read the past, present and future by a look at your hands."

"Pookker the tatchipen, Romany chye" (tell the truth, gipsy girl), aw said, fairly on mi mettle neaw, an' gam to talk owt fro Hebrew to Hopscotch. "Heaw mich for a booty barvellopen?" (rich fortune).

Hoo stared an' said "Aye!" in a wondherin road, turnin on her heel as iv inclined to bowt.

"Here's a shokorry," aw said, howdin a sixpence eaut. "Will that buy cooshto bok (good luck) or tha wants moore?"

"Aye!" hoo said again, showin two rows o' white teeth. "You know!" an' wi a wave o' th' hond hoo were gwone, levin us gawpin at one another.

"Aw'll tell thee what," Ben says, "tha'll freeten some o' these folk eaut o' their wits wi thi jabber afore we getten back into English again. But aw believe yon jade knows what tha myent."

Aw believed so misel, an' began thinkin th' gipsies were noane forced to tell o they knew to every chance comer. We walked on through th' camp, seein nowt very wondherful, went as far as owd Ned's tent, an' were turnin back again when a dashin young horseman throtted up. He were smartly donned in a black velveteen jacket, wi ribbed breeches fittin his shanks like a skin; a bunch o' black curls hung on his breawn foryead, sthragglin fro undher his soft wide-flanged billycock; his e'en were black, restless, just abeaut t' thirty-second part ov a line eaut o' plumb; his nose big an' sthraight, his jaw square, his top-lip full, his teeth white an' seaund; he sit his roan mare like some figure dhropped eaut ov a picther, as honsome an' good temper't a mon as needs to be met.

In a twinkle he'd jumped deawn, teed his horse to th' rails, poo'd th' saddle off, an' were makin toard Ned's tent when aw spoke to him.

"Sar shan, Romany chal?" (How are you, gipsy man?)

"Cooshko divvus, pal" (good day, brother), he said, stoppin to look at us. "Who taught *you* to rokker Romany?"

"Aw've had plenty o' teighchers—Leland, Borrow, Simson, an' plenty moore beside."

"Maybe you're a lavengro?" (word master), th' gipsy said.

"Hardly that."

"At any rate you're a kairengro (house-dweller), by the look of your skin."

"That's thrue, an' a loomengro beside, iv tha knows what that is. Tha'll not belong to this thribe, aw think?"

"Kekker (no), gorgio."

"Which then? Boswell or Taylor, Heren or Lovell?"

"I am Lemuel Heren."

He said that like a mon sure his name nobbut needed to be yerd to be known.

"Aw've met Herens afore neaw in Yokshire dingles," aw said, "an' fund three grase-knots planted i' mony a windin lone. Tha'll be fro th' big county thisel, happen?"

"Awer (yes). I have galloped from Strensall on my cooshto grye (good horse) there, to visit Romany Ned by the boro-pani (great water). Now there's a grye, gorgios! There's a yok (eye) for the wind and a foot for the rom (road)!"

"It's a pratty horse, for sure," says Ben, takkin o in, "an' would be shuz what tha co'd it. 'Grye,' is it, weighver? Aw con think on o' that? Aw'm larnin—aw'm larnin!"

"Buy her!" says young Heren, th' hope ov a bargain leetin his dark e'en. "Thirty pounds for her as she stands, and we'll spend a cotor (guinea) for luck-penny."

"Aw feel i' no thradin humour this mornin," aw said. "Beside, my stable's abeaut full. Happen mi mate here con accommodate thee. Yov's a posh-horry undher his woodrus." (He's a half-penny under his bed.)

"Aw never reckon to buy nowt nobbut thoroughbreds," Ben said, very solidly.

Heren laughed, sayin we were noane sich pappeneys (geese) as we looked, raythera lift-honded mak ov a compliment, an' went his road, seein there were no business to be done.

"What abeaut that bacca, Ben?" aw said.

"Oh! tha's won it fair enough. Some neet when we'n time aw'll tak a lesson off thee i' this gibberidge, for iv ever there were a language fit to cure toothwartch this is it."

That Romany gang seems to make a profitable job eaut o' fortin tellin, fishin, knife-grindin, tinkerin, an' sichlike thraditional gipsy roads ov addlin a livin. Th' owd greenwood days are o'er for 'em, th' ancient rovin habits at an end, an' t' gronchildher o' this generation 'll be civilised ratepayers very likely. For nearly four hundherd year these dark-skinned folk han travell't up an' deawn England, but they'n never larn't th' English habit o' makin slaves o' theirsel for brass. Gettin th' best o' summer weather, lyin close through winther time, doin just wark enough to keep theirsel wick, never bother't bi rents, taxes, nor physic, it looks to me a question iv we're as mich wiser nor gipsy folk as we reckon to be. Iv they're noane book-larn't they could put scholars up to a wrinkle or two; iv their property's little their care's less; iv they leven no gowd for their childher they hond deawn to 'em full reet an' liberty to wandher as they will through t' length an' breadth o' this bonny island, together wi bodies ov iron an' leather warranted not to wear eaut i' mich less nor ninety year.

We left th' camp, walking past a choice collection o' pop-bottle stonnins, dog kennels an' chicken cotes, pushin forrad bi th razzle-dazzle to mix wi white folk again on th' promenade; an mi spirits dhropped as they will do on th' last day ov a holiday. Happen young Lemuel had summat to do wi it, for aw couldn't help thinkin ov his bowd figure flyin across moor an' common on his beauncin grye, a hawve-tamed jookal barkin at his heels, nowt but shustys or groovnys (rabbits or cattle) to disturb him, th' world his own, a boro-rye (gentleman) hissel, an' his wife—iv he had one—a rawnee (lady); an' accordin to my notions, Rachda sthreets an' facthries made a poor picther compar't wi that sunleet view.

"Come on, Ben," aw said. "It's time to be shappin toard wom, for aw'm gettin deawn i' t' meauth."

"Tha'll get up again," says Ben. "Aw feel raythor soory we're gooin back so soon—I'm like just gettin brokken in to th' spot."

Heawever, back we went soon on i' th' afthernoon, nowt no moore happenin to us. Th' lonlady gav us a cake o' throdkin apiece, nicely lapped i' papper an' lookin just like two tambourines, for a partin present; an' we shook honds wi th' cheerful honest little woman, promisin to come again.

Th' journey back were middlin short, but met ha bin moore comfortable; becose we'd six childher, four tin boxes, thirteen papper parcels an' a long-hondled fishin net i' th' carriage wi us, beside seven groon-up folk; an' bwoth Ben an' me took moor reawm up nor we should ha done a week afore. We londed safe enough, climbed up to Cronkeyshay once again, an' theere we parted.

"Neaw Ben," aw said, "afore aw lev thee there's one very sayrious question aw mun ax, an' aw press thee on th' credit ov a gradely mon to pookker tatchipen."

"Pookker be hanged!" he said. "What is it tha wants to know?"

"Is there owt at Blackpool or nowt?"

"Nowt particlar. Heaw mony times mun aw tell thee yet!"

"Well, neaw, tha cross-grain't owd turmit, just reckon up o thi chep thrips, an' tell me heaw mony tha's liked betther nor this?"

Ben stared at me, scrat his yead a minute, thinkin forty picks to th' inch.

"Bi th' mass, tha'rt reet! Aw ne'er had a less taydious little eaut i' mi life! But there's nowt i' Blackpool."

OWD JOSEPH.

MI godfayther had getten owd
When first aw seed his face;
His yure were white, his blood ran cowd,
He're stowin i' life's race.

Tall, thin, his cheeks weel-dhried an' shrunk
He stood up like a dart,
Wi thoughtsome foryead, een deep-sunk,
An' kindness in his heart.

He slubbed at Cherrick's, paid his road,
Lived happy wi his wife,
Wi sthraight-set feet he olez throde
I' th' clenest thracks o' life.

He'd ne'er no childher, so aw geet
O th' love he'd saved an' kept,
For whol mi kessen't yead were weet
Into his heart aw crept.

A year-owd chilt, aw totther't reaund,
His finger i' mi grip,
An' through his bit o' garden-greaund
Soon larn't to run an' skip.

Theere daisies red an' white he grew,
Wi ladslove clumped between,
Pyert marigowds an' lupins blue,
An' sallet tendher-green.

Theere oft he's ta'en me on his knees,
Tellin me nursery tales;
Larn't me to catch gowd butterflees,
An' heaw to freeten snails.

Neaw breek-built woles ston thick an' hee
Where once that garden smil't,
But th' fleawery plot's as plain to me
As when aw were a chilt.

What pride aw felt when first sent eaut
To tak his breakfast deawn!
Wi shinin can an' teed-up cleaut
Aw swagger't o through th' teawn.

OWD JOSEPH.

What thrills o' bliss shot through me when
On th' billy aw'd a ride !
Sich thrills as aw've ne'er known again,
Though swifther wheels aw've thried.

That facthory's stopped an' empty neaw,
Aw pass it every day !
Through woles an' windows, dark an' feaw,
Keen memory makes a way.

Th' owd wayther-wheel sets off full wap,
Th' owd oily smell's unspent,
An' olez stons that good owd chap
Above his slubbins bent.

At four year owd aw'd fatten't eaut,
Mi yure hung straight an' snod,
An' rainbow-like aw frisked abeaut
I' frock o' Heelan plod.

So fine aw looked, owd Joseph geet
Mi picther ta'en i' th' teawn ;
An' neaw, shuz wheere aw shift mi feet,
Wi me that picther's beaun.

It shows an owd good-lookin mon,
Wi sunken cheek an' e'e ;
An' fast asleep, wi th' frock new on,
Aw'm cradl't on his knee.

When th' fine owd chap that likeness bought,
Mi plods an' beef to show,
Aw guess it never sthruck his thought
He'd ta'en hissel an' o.

So weel he liked mi childish ways
Together we mut be ;
An' when his wife deed, full o' days,
He'd nobry nobbut me.

Some stock o' Sethurdays we went
For counthry walk or ride,
Some Sundays in his heause aw've spent,
Some dinners helped to side.

So for awhile through th' world we passed,
Samples o' young an' owd,
An' then poor Joseph coome to th' last,
So they laid him eaut o' th' cowd.

Snod, smooth.

Dyeath freetn't noane ov him, he geet
His weary bwons to bed;
He smil't an talked to us at neet,
I' th' mornin he were dyead.

Friendship like eaurs con ston some wear,
It's taugh an' thick i' th' crust;
On one side thoughtful love an' care,
On t'other simple thrust.

It's like to last my time, shuzheaw,
For that first, long-lost friend
Howds lodgins i' mi yeadpiece neaw,
An' frames to do whol th' end.

Iv ever we should meet up yon,
Th' owd chap 'll feel some sad;
He waint be awther't, but, bi th' mon,
He'll never know his lad!

This scanty yure—these whiskers grey—
Eh dear! heaw time flies reaund!
Is *this* th' fat chilt 'at used to play
In th' square o' garden greaund.

Yet there's no deaubt we're bund to be
Friends whol we'n peawer to feel;
For Joseph olez did like me,
An' aw've loved him some weel.

A SARMON FOR DICK.

MY youngest lad coome cryin in,
Makin a miserable din,
At baggin-time last neet;
"What's up, mi little mon?" aw said,
But Dicky nobbut wagged his yead,
An' fro his skyblue dayleets shed
Big dhrops o' blindin weet.

"Fayther," he says when th' sobs were still,
"Aw've sin a seet 'at's made me crill;
Aw wish yo'd just bin reaund!
Some lads were cobbin stones, an' knocked
A swallow neest, wi young uns stocked,
Fro th' gable end—reet deawn it socked,
Bang onto th' stony greaund!

T' brids had no fithers on—they rowl't
Abeaut fro side to side, an' yeawl't
Becose they couldn't fly;
Then t' lads set to an' punced 'em weel,
As iv th' poor skrikers couldn't feel,
Threighdin 'em deawn wi red clog-heel,
An' that's what made me cry.

They grund an' rubbed 'em into th' greaund,
Whol nobbut blood an' nast lee reaund
Where th' brokken neest had fo'n;
Then off they scutther't at full speed,
An' soon on t' yezin-throff aw seed
Th' owd swallows dhrop, wi worms to feed
Their childher dyead an' gwone.

Aw'd watched thoose swallows mony a day
Buildin their neest wi slutch an' hay,
An' yerd 'em twitther sweet
When th' heause were done an' stuck to th' wole,
Weel stuffed wi cotton wool they stole,
Wi just one little window hole
To let 'em in at neet.

They twitther't, looked o reaund, an' clung
To th' breeks where t' little neest had hung,
Then deawn to th' greaund they flew,
Chirpin wi sich heart-wartchin din
Reaund th' spot wheere, daubed an' throdden in
Th' red slutch, some bits o' wool an' skin
Showed what had bin to do.

Yezin-throff, easing or rain trough.

Aw watched whol aw could ston no moore,
So theere aw left 'em bwoth on th' floor,
An' theere they'll stop an' fret;
Aw know thoose lads—they live deawn t' sthreet;
Let's tell th' policeman on that beat;
He'll lock 'em up, an' sarve 'em reet;
They'll o be hanged aw'll bet!"

"Steady, mi bonny Dick!" aw said;
"Don't get sich notions i' thi yead,
But let this murdher teighch
Thi tendher heart what badness lies
I' th' mind o' mon, shuz heaw he thries
Above his slippy thoughts to rise,
An' act as weel as preighch.

This taste for blood's fast deein eaut;
Somebry may see it end, no deaubt,
But that wain't be to-day;
Afore thi vengeance gets so hee,
Think on, for o their cruelty,
God made yon lads as weel as thee,
An' eaut o' th' same soft clay.

Tha reckons nowt o' killin flees;
I' bottlin jacksharps wick tha sees
No sort ov harm or ill;
Aw've sin thee lame a frog or two,
An' neaw tha wants a hangin do,
Cravin this nowty murdherin crew
O in a rook to kill.

It's th' world's owd fashion't way at t' sthrong
To waker subjects 'll do wrong!
Iv tha'rt too good for sich,
Reckon thisel wi t' betther end,
But thry to make wur fellahs mend
Bi dyelin wi 'em like a friend;
Throttlin wain't help 'em mich.

Thee set th' example, takkin care
Thisel o livin things to spare;
That's o *tha* needs to shap;
Love o 'at crawls or flies, an' see
Heaw love 'll come again to thee;
There's One aboon 'at keeps *His* e'e
On every cruel chap."

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